

SEA-WEED

AND

WHAT WE SEED.

MY VACATION

AT

LONG BRANCH AND SARATOGA.

BY

"JOHN PAUL"

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AUTHOR OF

"Liffith Lank," "St. Twel'mo," "A Wicked Woman,"
etc., etc.



NEW YORK:

G. W. Carleton & Co., Publishers.

LONDON: LOW & CO.

MDCCCLXXVI.

PS3157
W6 54

PREFACE.

THAT which we now entitle "Preface of a Book" was once known as the "Argument"—perhaps because it was held that a good deal of argument is necessary to prove that one has any right to put a book upon the public. That point I will not now argue, as the burden rests on my publishers. But perhaps I had better explain that the loose-letters, here bound and sheaved, appeared in the *New York Tribune* during the summer just past, under the title head of "JOHN PAUL'S VACATION." Why so labelled, I do not know, for certainly the writing of them is the only work I have done during the year. Possibly "Vacation" was a misprint for "Vocation." Indeed it seems my fate to drift round among the watering places every summer, writing letters which, in the regular course of nature, find their way into *Tribune* supplements, within a month or two of being written. As before remarked, last summer's work you have here. For all the work and wisdom that went before you must go to "JOHN PAUL'S BOOK," a big volume, published by a large Hartford firm at an astonishingly small price.

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MY VACATION.

ARRIVAL AT LONG BRANCH—COMPARATIVE ATTRAC-
TIONS OF LONG BRANCH AND THE PIT CALLED
BOTTOMLESS—HOW LONG A TANNER MAY LAST
YOU—SAILING UP THE BAY—THE HOTEL CLERK
OF THE PERIOD.



REQUENTLY I have asked of myself
(as well as of other personal friends)
what makes Long Branch so favorite a
watering-place. Ease of access, all reply. Now
I do not see that this explains it at all. The
Pit-called Bottomless is proverbially easy of
access, but it has never come into much favor
as a good watering-place. On the contrary,
does it not stand glaringly and nakedly forth
as perhaps the worst watering-place to be
found in the world or out of it—if we except,
possibly, Coney Island? In both places it
is said that you find scant vegetation and a
plentiful lack of shade, and is not this peculiarity

common to Long Branch as well? But do not for a moment imagine that I am desirous of drawing a parallel between Long Branch and either of the popular resorts above referred to. Shades of similarity exist, of course, but I can point you to some very wide differences when it comes to narrowing the thing down fine. For instance, President Grant is here and he isn't there—I am sorry to say. Sorry to say, I say, because the facilities for smoking on the sandy reaches of Coney Island far exceed any which this world—elsewhere—can offer. Again, they charge more here and do not really give one much better accommodations for the money. Where it is so hot that greenbacks would burn, a hotel proprietor is less intent on getting your last dollar, I fancy.

By the way, did I say President Grant was here? If I did, I lied! He's at Cape May. And may it not be that to that may he has gone to indicate that under certain circumstances he might—? Who knows? But may he not find doubling that cape a very different sort of thing from trebling a term?

Now all of that preceding paragraph is ill-natured, nor am I sure that it is wise. The President has never said or done anything to offend me—in fact, looking hastily back over his career in the chair, I am unable to call to mind that he has ever said or done much of anything at all. As for this third-term business, does not the “divine Williams,” as the French name him, assure us positively that “a tanner will last you nine year?” Surely then one has to stretch the skin of his imagination but very little to let him last you twelve. So far as personal concern enters into the matter, I had as lief as not see the Presidential pantaloons glued to the Presidential chair were it not for the serious impediment this would be to rising in the world. And insomuch as men may rise on the stepping-stones of their dead shelves to higher things, might he not aspire very properly to the Vatican? *Sartoris Resartus*. I have spoken. And I am not averse to a foreign consulate, a post-office appointment, a clerk-ship in a drug-store, or the Treasury Department, or any other honorable and lucrative office that

may be lying round loose within the governmental gift.

But somehow it seems I have branched away from the subject ; to return now to the Branch.

One of the most delightful things about Long Branch is the getting to it—the most delightful, I should say, if we except the getting away from it. The sail down the bay is “just lovely,” as a young lady remarked on the boat last evening. The “lovely,” however, admits of qualification. It is not *just* lovely unless you have a lovely day for it, and lovely companions, and take a boat earlier than the 3 o'clock one of Saturday afternoons, for that invariably comes laden with all sorts of humanity (to say nothing of Wall-st. brokers), rolling gunnels under with its freight of capitalists, bummers, and gentlemen with hooked noses wearing glittering rings on dirty fingers, who confirm by loud appeals to the God of Israel their most trivial assertions, smoking domestic cigars furiously the while.

Think not that I dislike the Jew. For the Jew, pure and simple, I have a reverence and respect that go not forth similarly to embrace any other

people on earth ; but for the greasy creature with tawdry jewelry strung over execrable linen, and a deeper edge of black round his finger-nails than that which borders a widow's cards in her first mourning—for this inexpressible spectre which no adjective can adequately describe, no adverb properly qualify, and no process short of cremation decently purify—for this nauseating wretch who is neither Jew nor gentile-man, I have only horror and disgust.

Now let them surround me on my next trip down the bay, poisoning the air with the fumes of their vile weeds, and shouting their infamous transactions in gold and stocks to each other across my unwilling ears, and they'll be revenged enough. For I'll jump overboard if I can't "get shut" of them any other way.

Soft blow the spicy breezes,
From Blackwell's blessed isle ;
Where every woman wheezes
And only man is vile. .

(It is not Blackwell's Island, but Governor's, that we pass in sailing down the bay, but Governor's filled out the rhythm of the line a little

too well, and the class which people Blackwell's are really our governors after all.)

If I owned a steam yacht I think I'd spend the Summer months cruising between the city and Sandy Hook. Given good weather, good company, a store of good provisions, and a good store of Great Moral Organ supplements, what more could the mind of man ask for !

As a few words about Long Branch may not be inappropriate, especially when it is considered that thence this letter is dated, perhaps you will pardon me if I descend to particulars for a moment or two. Generally speaking the hotels are well filled. This assertion I hazard as the result of observation rather than of inquiry. The hotel clerk I venerate in the abstract, but I am rather afraid to approach him in the concrete. My experience is that when he does not snub you he patronizes you, and I'd about as lief be killed one way as another. Where moral character and that sort of thing tells, I feel particularly at home, but where a man is judged only by his clothes, confidence fails me, and I am backward about coming forward.

“ Can I have a room ? ” I modestly ask after registering my name.

Clerk looks at me for a moment, takes in the general unostentatiousness of my apparel at a glance, turns away and attends to the swells who get credit of Bell instead of buying for cash of Porter, chats with the young men whom he knows for a few minutes, pauses to tell some old gentleman with a bald head the last brilliant *bon mot* apropos of the Beecher trial, and when everybody else is roomed and he has settled the pen right behind his ear, then he calls the smallest bell-boy in the office and turns to me with, “ Show this gentleman up to 993 ! ” And by this time I feel so humble about it that I bow to the bell-boy and look round for his bag and wonder how I’m to find No. 993 to show him to.

I narrate now no particular grievance ; consider this the statement merely of a great general fact. Nor think that I blame the hotel clerk of the period. On the contrary, I am convinced that the fault lies with my tailor ; to him I shall address myself for the correction of the fault ; he must sling more style into my clothes, so to

speaking, tighten up my trousers' legs a trifle, roll the collar of my coat down lower, and add a foot or two to its skirt. Otherwise I shall have to wear a placard on my breast stating exactly how much these clothes do cost, for if you suppose that my tailor doesn't charge as much as any other one, just try him on once!

Comparatively unfamiliar with Long Branch, I cannot institute a fair comparison between this season and former ones, and the statements of hotel proprietors must be taken, of course, with more grains of salt than go with a cucumber. But all agree in saying that the season is scarcely up to the average; and there is less dress and display, there are fewer fine turnouts and tandems, and such glittering generalities, than one would look for. The times make themselves felt to a certain extent, of course—with contracted incomes a contraction of expenditures becomes necessary—and again the Saratoga Regatta has probably drawn many away from the seaside.

The west end is not quite "flush," and the Ocean House I should say has "drawn" fewer

“pairs ” still than go to make “a full.” Of these two houses—which without invidiousness to the others may be called the leading taverns of the Branch—the West End seems to bear away the palm of solidity. It is here that wealth and respectability most do congregate, and there is a corresponding air of steady solemnity about the corridors. Guests bow gravely to each other, and inquire about families and finance, and the Centennial, fanning themselves the while with *The Atlantic*, or a *Popular Science Monthly*. The Ocean House, on the other hand, is “more picturesquer,” and the people there stir round to a livelier measure, shaking one another by the flipper in a frivolous way, and cracking jokes, and asking conundrums, while they rattle over the leaves of *Harper's* to see the pictures.

Where wealth and respectability congregate, and *The Atlantic* is read, there you always find me.

LIFE AT LONG BRANCH.

BATHING UNFASHIONABLE AT THE WEST END—
WATER AS A MOTOR—LOOKING AT THE SEA AND
TALKING OF THE UNATTAINABLE—THE BLUFF—
AN EGYPTIAN GAME.

LONG BRANCH, July 12.



HAT is there half so sweet in life—if
we except love's young dream and the
first scollop of the season—

As the girl late concealed '
By flounces and pillows,
When she rushes revealed
In the light of the billows ?

Occasionally it occurs to me that I'd like to be a billow, several billows in fact. But I'd be eclectic in my treatment. Some of the bathers I'd drown. For, standing on the shore, I notice many who should never go in ; an equal number who should never be allowed to come out. We of the West End don't bathe much. It isn't

"quite the thing," you know! Too heavy swells for the surf, are we, you see! A fellow can't carry his eye-glasses and cane into the breakers, and without them we'd be lost. The ladies would do it more if Worth—or the other man, Moschowitz—made bathing-dresses. But they won't. They'll make a woman a muslin megatherium and her husband a bankrupt, but they won't make her a bathing-dress. I suppose this is because of the impossibility of putting thirty yards of grenadine into one.

Well, I don't blame others for not bathing. Individually, I had rather see bathin' than sea bathe. Being in the undertow has no charms for your correspondent; I'd as lief be underhanded as undertoad. A common bath-tub answers very well for me, and soap does the work thoroughly enough without the aid of sand. There's no great fun in getting wet all over unless one needs washing. If I made a practice of sea-bathing I think I'd have an India-rubber suit made and take an umbrella in with me. Water, as the old Frenchman remarked, has so taste of sinners since the flood!

Apropos of water, I do not believe in it as a motor, though some that I have drank—Hathorn for instance—is powerful enough to suit the most fastidious fancy. I once moved Appleton's dog, when he sat howling under my window at Riverdale at night, nigh upon a mile with a comparatively small dipperful of plain hot water ; and I think that dog is going yet ; but that a locomotive can be run, from here to Philadelphia, say, by no other moving power, I will not believe till I see it done—and then I'll say it's spiritualism.

Better than bathing I like to sit on the beach and look out upon the sea and talk of the Unattainable—the Unattainable with a big U.

There is that about the sea which vexes while it fascinates me. Gazing out from the shore, far as human vision can reach, you can only see far enough after all to know that there is something beyond, and of that beyond you can only conjecture unless you take the word of others for it. And the others, sitting on the beach with you and looking seaward, can see no farther than you—unless they happen to have a pocket tel-

escape along, and even that won't enable them to see what isn't going on through an umbrella! If the sea would but be still for a moment or two—if it would only come up to the beach just once, and fold its hands, and for one brief instant hush its sad monotone, the complaining of a dissatisfied soul—

If it would but “let the old cat die” once—as we used to say at school when we took turns at swinging under a tree—then it does seem to me that I too could go away and rest!

But no; last thing at night the wail of the waves is in my ears, and when I wake in the morning still their sad sobbing is audible, and I know that all night long they have been tossing and tumbling like one in pain, knowing no sleep, finding no rest.

Far out where the horizon—“the sapphire-spangled marriage-ring of the land”—stretches, all seems peaceful enough; from there you hear no sound, and there you see no motion, and you think that on the shore Mrs. Browning must have sat, and far away from the shore she must have looked, when she wrote:

“ And I smiled to think God’s greatness
Flowed around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest.”

But alas, you know—if you know much of anything—that still the same tumultuous throbbing is there, that only the dim distance hides it, only the intervening space smothers it; that the heart of Ocean is never still, and that its wild pulse-beats are felt and heard on every shore.

Last evening we sat on the beach and piled up mounds of sand—these the monuments, we said, of a pleasant meeting. And this morning I went and looked for the mounds; lo, they were gone. Are we not, all of us, all life through, mound-builders of this sort, more or less. What is there we can build up which shall not perish? Verily, even this Great Moral Organ supplement shall not last for ever. If the flames get not hold of it, some young woman will wear it for a pannier, and so shall its last end be worse than the first. As regards leaving something for posterity to look upon I don’t know that it matters much whether I write in the morn-

ing or pile up sand in the evening. For if I look in The Great Moral Organ for what I have written next morning, it is not there ; and if I look on the beach for my sand cairn, that is not there either.

Do you not love to see the foam come in ? It doesn't seem to care whether school keeps or not ; there's a joyousness about it which I would like to make mine. Look, it has its little fling, sparkles in the sunlight for a moment, and is gone. None care that it is gone perhaps, but what cares the foam ? Were choice yours, would you not say :

"I'd rather be the glad, bright, leaping foam
Than the smooth, sluggish sea. O let me live
To love, and flush, and thrill, or let me die ?"

Really the temptation to go on with this sort of thing is very strong, but my moral force is equal to the occasion. It is expected that one shall do a little fine writing when he's by the sad sea waves, but it is possible to run the thing into the water—water too deep for utterance. Let us get back to soundings.

After thinking Mr. Alexander Smith's simile

about the ocean being the bridegroom and the beach the bride all over, I've concluded that it is correct in the main, and that Mr. Smith did pretty well, taking into account his limited knowledge, for at the period of life when this simile had birth the bard was unmarried. But it's all a mistake about the sea rushing up to deck the tawny brow of his bride with shells—at least that is not the order of the day—or night—at Long Branch. If you'll trust to me for it, he runs up and hits her over the head with a chunk of cord-wood, a dead dog, or something else equally pleasant and fragrant. Nor does she seem to expect any better treatment at his hands, nor even does she go half way to receive that; still she stands, and never stirs a peg to get out of the way, good patient type of woman that she is—but she doesn't step eagerly froward to take a belting for all that.

It is a source of much regret to the general public that ladies refuse to be persuaded down to the beach more frequently. But the widows say the salt air spoils their crape, the girls don't want the crimp taken out of their hair, and mar-

ried women—well I suppose it's no fun to "spoon" round with their own husbands, and they'd not go with any one else, of course.

Wall St. empties itself into the Branch every Saturday. Oh the lame ducks that you see here of Sundays! May I call them limp-ets? Or do limpets only cling to rocks? These seem attached to sand.

The southern part of Long Branch seems higher than the northern. In front of the West End and along the shore we have a bluff. And financially as well as physically speaking, property is much higher along here than in other localities. You get a breeze in this vicinity when not a breath seems to be stirring elsewhere. But I can confidentially assert, as the result of repeated experiment, that it is possible to raise a breeze at short notice most anywhere, not excepting the remotest cottages, by calling round at inopportune times. The young man of most limited capacity can do this—indeed, the more limited his capacity the better for the purpose.

As for the bluff around the West End, I am informed there is another game, near at hand, a

game commonly known as Pharo. I don't know what it is exactly, but suppose it has something to do with the Egyptian king of that name ; indeed, I have heard young men on the piazza speak of "copperin, the king"—all Egyptian kings are copper-colored, I believe—and of dealings with queens, &c. The name of Chamberlain is frequently mentioned, too—this I suppose means a man who was chamberlain to some high-toned old king. When I once more get back to the bosom of my family I shall turn to the book of Exodus and see if I can find out what it all means.

In a previous letter I mentioned the West End and the Ocean—as the only hotels here. There I was mistaken. There are more than you can shake a stick at. For this reason I have neither attempted to shake a stick at nor stick a stake into any one of them. I do not think I have even referred in complimentary terms to the house that sticks a steak into me. Nor is there any reason that I should. Mrs. Paul keeps a better house than any I've struck yet in all my wanderings, and it has never at any time occurred

to me that I ought to give her a lift in a paper for it, neither has she ever seemed to expect one. As for hotels, the world over, they're all bad enough as contrasted with one's own house. There's a difference in them, of course—some are worse than others. Personally, I prefer the Gilsey to any other hotel in the world. This preference comes, perhaps, because of its charges being less ; a man can go there and live on nothing. If you don't believe me, try it once. Many men have gone there with nothing and come away with much. Instance in point : last week I put one shirt in the wash, and they gave me pieces enough to make three. I've not had time to put the pieces together yet, but hope to find the time between this and Sunday, making a shift to do without any in the meanwhile.

As for the hotels here I copied the names of all out of a Long Branch Directory, so as to give them a fair and square deal all round in the way of mention, but lost the memorandum. As for the people, I made a list of names for publication, but luckily found out that those I had down would punch my head if I put them in, and that

those I had not down would treat me similarly if I didn't ; so I burned up the memorandum-book, and this letter will go forth to the world bearing as a tag one great name alone—that of JOHN PAUL.



MORAL REFLECTIONS APROPOS OF LONG BRANCH.

HOW IT IS HOT—THE GIRL OF THE DISHEVELLED
SORT—CRABS AND COTTAGES—POSSIBILITY
OF BEING VIRTUOUS AND YET HAVING CAKES
AND ALE—SOCIAL SURGEONS—A PLAN FOR MIX-
ING SOCIETY.

LONG BRANCH, July 13.



EVER until I saw them driving around
here did I know who or what was meant
by *Hocy Polloi* !

Occasionally we have a hot day at the Branch
and this is a "blazer." It was only 9 of the morn-
ing when I took my accustomed walk abroad,
the many poor to see, but even then the sands
were so hot that it seemed like treading over
the Tartarean tiles. What there is of breeze is
off land, but on the ocean there is scarce a rip-
ple. Lazy fishing boats are bobbing up and
down like buoys, and becalmed smacks, sloops,

schooners, brigantines, brigs, barks, and full rigged ships lie in the distance, fanning their superheated masts with idly-flapping sails. The porpoises out yonder are sluggish in the sea, and stand on their heads, turning slow somersaults, which expose only the tip of fin and tail to the sun, instead of bounding into the air with the wonderful vigor and elasticity observable in this fish when a brisk breeze is blowing and he has business to do. The fish-hawk perches himself on his high, dry limb, and, safe for the moment from his cruel pursuit, the menhaden is merry and the porgy has peace. Yesterday that same bird, now loafing on a limb, was hawking fish through the air and screaming his wares vociferously. To-day you see he buries his talons in a napkin instead, as'twere.

The girl of the disheveled sort, got up in that *négligé* way that requires more fixing than any other style of toilet, with blowing hair, her clothes half off, and one shoe-string and a stay-lace fluttering loosely in the wind, who promenades the beach with a Byron in her hand and an impression that she looks like Gulnare, has

gone into the house. Not a planted umbrella, with two young persons green and growing under it, is to be seen on the beach. The piazzas even are deserted. Everybody, who has not gone to the races, is in his or her room ringing for ice and pitying those who are compelled to stay in the city.

"I pities all unfortunate folks ashore now," sings the sailor in a gale of wind at sea, as he felicitates himself and his shipmates on being where single bricks and whole chimneys cannot come tumbling about their ears.

There's a fitness about most things if one only sees them aright. Now these cottages of the seaside, with their projecting points and angles and variegated colors, have to me very much the look of crabs. They seem "quite at home" on the sand, seeking no shade and asking no shade—at least such shade as you would give them—and ready to slide off sideways or pirouette upon one leg and an ear gracefully backwards on very slight provocation.

The analogies of life are always amusing to me. Some persons remind me of crabs, smooth

on one side, prickly on another, and you can never tell which side you're going to find uppermost. Lay him down and you can't tell which way he means to travel ; pick him up you can't tell which way he is going to squirm, or exactly where he's going to claw you with those confounded hooks and crooks in his awkward gyrations. His friendliest salutation is a pinch instead of a hand-shake, and the only way to carry him comfortably in your bosom is to eat him. 'Tis a case of entire swallowing on one side or the other—either you must swallow the crab with all his gable-ends and outstanding cornices, or let him “ gobble you up,” hook and line, bob and sinker ; else it is an eternal struggle between you and the crab, a threshing round on the beach of life, and comfort for neither.

We are all of us shellfish more or less, perhaps. I am a crab, thou art a crab, he, she, or it is a crab ; we are crabs, you are crabs, they are crabs. Deny it if you can—cer !

The hermit or soldier crab is to me an interesting object of contemplation. The fish hawk has his place of rest, the wild clam where

to dwell, but the spirit that gave the bird its nest, did n't give this fellow a shell. So he has to forage for it, and he generally takes the largest one he can find. Were he a human creature you'd find him patronizing the "misfit stores"—stores to which clothes that do not fit those they are made for are sold by first-class tailors, and disposed of at reduced prices to a not very particular second-class sort of customers.

When I see this unfortunate crab running round with that big shell on his back, I think of the many men I know who have moved into houses too large for their means and are now staggering under them and a mortgage.

Notwithstanding the warmth of the day it is pleasanter in reality than the murky, muggy weather which has been the rule heretofore since my arrival. Now the air is clear and dry ; then it fitted you closely, hung upon you and about you like hot, steaming flannel, so destitute of electricity that not a spark went out into your conversation, let you agitate and rub the crystal cylinder of your brain never so violently ; *homo* nodded, women drowsed. Oh, the misera-

ble feeling, the gloom, the depression that come over one at such times ! When the little boy, leading a man who looks as though in some convulsion of the laundry a washtub had sneezed indigo all over his face, approaches you, asking pitifully, " Something for the Blue man, Sir," you feel like telling him and the blew man to go away and be blowed, for you're a blue man yourself to-day, deeply, darkly, beautifully blue, but you don't ; on the contrary you give a green-back to his blue face and send him on his way rejoicing. For you may be blown up yourself, some day, and how would that soot you ?

The only man of color I object to is a Dun !

Let me frankly confess, however, that I do not like to have a social surgeon for a companion. I know that under that fair girl's skin lie raw, red flesh, unsightly veins and arteries, and ghastly hued muscles—other things, unpleasant to contemplate perhaps—but for all that I don't want her peeled for me. *Dum vivimus !* Be dumb while you are living with us, and while we are living with them. Let us enjoy that which is

enjoyable in her, her grace, freshness, and enthusiasm ; let us regale ourselves on that which is good, and let the rest go if there be any which is not good, and undoubtedly there is if one dives beneath the surface. But why go beneath the surface ? You meet but at the surf, and don't intend to marry. It is not necessary to peel these belles in my ears week days and Sundays as though you were a sexton and I a ghoul, fond of funerals. At the present writing I'm not looking round for anybody to eat. This man may be a gambler ; that one a horse thief. But I have no money to lose, no horse to be stolen. The one can tell me something I want to know ; the other can explain something I'm curious about. *You* can't, my respectable friend, for I have long had access to your circle, and know pretty much all that you do—and the bulk of it isn't worth knowing. Arabella is very charming, but Anonyma can tell me more in ten minutes than Arabella could in a life-time, and that either would damage me very seriously is not clear to the unassisted vision. I'm the father of a family, and not a sardine. What are you, neighbor codfish ?

Is it not possible to be virtuous and yet have both cakes and ale? It is also possible to be virtuous and have only mush and milk, but all don't like that for a steady diet. There must be a point somewhere where respectability ends and stupidity begins—peace on earth will never be mine till I find it. For that stupidity and respectability, if not one and the same thing, must at least go hand in hand, I for one do not believe.

Seems to me there is something wrong about the arrangement of things at present. Take the churches, for instance—the very people get preached to who stand least in need of preaching; those most in need of preaching and teaching don't get a bit of it. 'Tis just as though the blessed rain should fall only on fat corn-fields, where a goodly congregation of ears and stalks is gathered together. Fortunately no human hand holds the rains, and both they and the dew fall on the unjust as well as the just (which is why I get wet, occasionally), watering waste places and invigorating the whole earth.

If one of your fine preachers would set up a dummy in his pulpit some Sunday his people per-

haps would not discover the difference, and he could go into the slums and tell a few of the slummers things they have never heard, while perhaps they in return might be able to tell him a good deal he has never dreamed of and which it would be well for him to know.

Weeds and grasses grow together ; each has its uses I suppose ; good can be got out of both if one go about it in the right way. That tall Timothy there won't hurt you more than a chapter of an Epistle, undoubtedly, but the belladonna standing in close juxtaposition has a mission and a meaning to you as well—don't make a full meal of it, though. Sometimes I think that if the good and bad in this world would mix a little more neither would be much harmed and both might be the better for it.

Still, coming to think about it, I don't know that I'd care to see my wife chasséeing round with that blackleg yonder on the beach, or sitting down to a plate of ice-cream with the anonymousness that has just gone flashing by in a basket phaeton. Theories are well enough in their way, but practice knocks them higher than

a kite, as Russell Sage remarked to Isaac Sherman in a little discussion about finance last evening. And I never could touch theology or these social questions with a ten-foot pole even without making a mess of it, and you won't again for a good while catch me so far away from my base as I've got to-day. So make the most of this run.

Strolling out doors now, in the middle of the day, I find it cool and comfortable enough for anybody, the thermometer marking 75°, a fresh south-east wind blowing in from the sea, the fish-hawks flying round, porpoises rolling, Isabella sitting on the beach under a gingham umbrella, and everybody, in short, doing just the very things I said they were not doing when this letter began, and which they were not doing at that time.

All of which only proves how *Tempus fugit*—which may be literally translated, perhaps, into lament that few get a good time. I for one am going to start out right now and see if I can't get one.

FISH-HAWKS AND FINANCE AT LONG BRANCH.

THE FISH-HAWK AND THE HACKMEN OF THE
AIR—THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO SITS ON THE
SHORE—TWO CAPITALISTS ON INFLATION—
LET INTO THE SECRET OF HOTEL MAN-
AGEMENT AT THE BRANCH.

LONG BRANCH, July 14.

He roosts him not upon the sands,
But up above their grasping hands—
Your Jerseyman he understands.

The soldier-crab beneath him sprawls
But not on him my wise bird falls—
For breakfast he prefers fish-balls.



HA'TS the Fish-hawk.

He's a born Brancher. Perched on a
high and dry limb you see him, the
while the cars whirl you over the wild sands
at the reckless speed of seven miles or so
an hour. Is he not a male and a brooder? That
nest of his, by the way, is a wonderful creation.

It was built by day's work, not by contract, and long before the war. Material was lower then than it is now—the driftwood and cordage, which go to make it up, were never before so high. 'Tis a raft up a tree, but rafters it has not. Neither has it many rooms, and here you see a wise provision of Providence. The head of this family is never tempted to go spooking round from one apartment to another, looking for a soft spot whereon he may lay his head. Neither, in such event, could the female bird be persuaded to follow him solicitously with a pillow ; the readiest thing to hand is a sharp stick, and with that she'd be after him if with anything. Another good thing about the Hawk House is that there are no stairs to go up ; on a similar plan of architecture I intend to construct my cottage. It shall all be down stairs, with vestibule and hall door on the roof ; no cellar-kitchen, no dumb waiter, for me. I don't see how a dumb waiter *can* answer ; if in the wide, wide world there be one that does, I'd like to hear from it.

The fish-hawk is not an eagle. Mountain heights and clouds he never scales ; fish are more

in his way, he scales them—possibly regarding them as scaly-wags. For my bird is pious ; a stern conservator is he of the public morals. Last Sunday a frivolous fish was playing not far from the beach and Dr. Hawk went out and stopped him. 'Tis fun to watch him at that sort of work—stopping play—though somehow it doesn't seem to amuse the fish much. Up in the air he poises pensively, hanging on hushed wings as though listening for sounds—may be a fish's. By and by he hears a herring—is he hard of herring, think you ? Then down he drops and soon has a Herring Safe. (Send me something, manufacturers, immediately.) Does he tear his prey limb from limb ? No, he merely sails away through the blue ether—how happy can he be with ether !—till the limb whereon his own nest is built is reached. Does the herring enjoy that sort of riding, think you ? Quite as much, I should say, as one does hack-driving. From my point of view the hawk is but the hackman of the air. Sympathize with the fish ? Not much. Nor would you if you heard the pitiful cry the hawk sets up the moment he finds

that his claws are tangled in a fish's back. Home he flies to seek domestic consolation, uttering the while the weeping cry of a grieved child ; there are tears in his voice, so you know the fish must be hurting him. The idea that a hawk can't fly over the water of an afternoon without some malicious fish jumping up and trying to bite him.

If a fish wants to cross the water safely, let him take a Fulton ferryboat for it. There he will find a sign reading :

"NO PEDDLING OR HAWKING
allowed in this cabin."

Strange that hawking should be so sternly prohibited on boats which are mainly patronized by Brooklynites chronically afflicted with catarrh ?

Why did they not have the regatta at Pleasure Bay (a sort of tender to the Branch) not far from here, instead of at Saratoga ? 'Tis the famous-est place for catching crabs in the universe, and that's about all the young oarsmen seem to do when they "regat." The row, too, that is made over the catching ! Was the apple of discord a crab apple, I wonder ?

Besides Pleasure Bay there are numbers of other pleasant places within easy driving, almost within comfortable walking distance of the Branch.—Red Bank, for instance. Indeed

. I know a Red Bank where the wild thyme grows, and thither a young lady and myself walked yesterday morning, not for the purpose of having a wild time, at all, but merely for the walk. But the bank where the wildest time can be had is a faro-bank I fancy. When I hazard this hypothesis, however, do not think that I belong to the Fancy.

At the Branch it is held that to walk is human, to drive about divine. If disposed for a drive all you have to do is to call a hackman, and tell him exactly how much money you have—all the rest is easy. After passing over your pocket-book, unhooking your gold watch and chain, and giving a bond and mortgage on your property at Metuchin, N. J., the rest of it is plain sailing ; you can go without further let or hinderance to Eatonville, Branchport, Rumson Neck—which is necks to t'other place—Tinton Falls, or Deal. Or, you can find a deal nearer to the West End

—whether or not it is a square deal, I can't tell you. Thirst you for the tiger? There is the jungle. The leopard may not change his spots, but that your ten-spots will change hands, if you tempt the layer-out of his lair, is more than likely. If you lose, go for sympathy to the same man with whom you would have divided the "pot," had you chanced to win. But I scarce think the first letters of that man's name would spell out any human initials.

Oh, a golden comb for golden hair,
And milk white pearls for a neck as fair,
And silver chains and all for me,
The day my ship comes home from sea.

So sang the maiden, sitting on the shore, and watching the coming and going of the tide, the sea-foam as it blew like fluffs of wool, across the beach. At her feet where they had been strewn by the lavish sea, lay shells and shining pebbles. Weird wrinkles on the beach showed where each successive wave, ambitiously climbing to reach higher than his fellow, had spent itself. Here you saw the splintered end of a spar protruding—part of a mast, perhaps, that had danced some brave flag high aloft, now lying prone and all but

buried in the sand. There lay a piece of oak-en bulwark, a fragment to which a mother with a babe may have clung, torn from some stout ship's sides. But a few feet out from the shore the gaunt ribs of a wreck loomed dark in the moonlight — bobbing up and down in the water they suggest ghostly bathers. Yet still the maiden sat and sang of her ship to arrive, and with the light fingers of fancy strung her neck and filleted her forehead with the pearls and gold with which fond hope promised her that it came freighted. Alas, poor girl, she knew not that even then her ship had sunk at sea, that down, down, many score fathoms down, its white sails were mildewing, and that already the mermaid-ens were making sport of her treasures! She read not the omens which lay round her aright—better, perhaps, that she should not; for she may forget the ship at sea, never remember that it has been long, long overdue, till fancy has freighted another for her. Alas, are there no underwriters for human hopes?—for the most precious of interests is there no insurance?

Better by far, though, that a ship should sink

far out at sea than go down alongside the wharf when harbor has been safely reached, erecting its gaunt and stained timbers in your sight, a perpetual remembrance of the dead.

A plague upon this poetry ; it will be the death of me yet ! But what shall one do when the fit is on him and the stars and the sea swing in rhythm together ! “Bring me a harp-shell, quick that I may strike it,” I shouted. Alas, but a bell boy and not a muse—not even a sea-mew—responded.

“For practice knocks theory higher than a kite.” That is what Mr. Sage remarked to Mr. Sherman last evening.

The conversation was on Finance, a subject with which I am popularly supposed to be familiar ; so there was no impropriety after all in carrying it on in my presence. Mr. Sherman is a “bear,” he sees no prospect of a bettering of business in the immediate future ; on the contrary, it is his opinion that things will go from bad to worse, that we stand on the threshold of hard times, that soon the door will swing wide open and that then we shall see—that which we shall see.

Mr. Sage, on the other hand, considers the present business depression as only temporary, brought about mainly by over-production in connection with a lessened demand, an unfortunate state of things in which our country by no means stands alone, but a state of things which will right itself naturally, and without any great shock or convulsion—at least at present. Both men are redemptionists, holding very similar views as regards the inexpediency of inflation, but differing as to the business outlook of the moment. Mr. Sherman's idea is that specie payments are less distant than is generally supposed; that the public, tired of currency, will not base transactions on it; hence the general stagnation, a refusal to make any ventures. Insensibly the public, he says, is already adjusting things on a specie basis. If a man go to a capitalist to borrow money on a piece of property, he has not the assurance to ask for much more than half as much as he would have demanded two years ago, nor could he borrow it if he did. The impressions of both borrower and lender have undergone a change as regards values. The question of specie pay-

ments has in great measure gone out of the hands of conventions and the people ; rapidly as possible it is resolving itself, and with little outside help. A similar struggle is going on in other countries, and a similar solution may be reached simultaneously. At present gold and silver are demonetized in France, Italy, and Austria as well as in the United States, being a commodity merely, and not money. In consequence, specie has flowed out from these non-specie-paying countries to those where there is a use for it. The instant these countries resume specie payments, back to them it flows again : here you have an immense contraction in fact, and immediately the shoe begins to pinch. About this time look out for breakers—to say nothing of brokers and bankers.

It is very possible that I have got Mr. Sherman's ideas a little mixed with my own, for to tell the truth it does puzzle me dreadfully at times to decide just where my own ideas end and other people's begin. If so, I ask his pardon for the misrepresentation ; certainly there was only sound sense in his talk, however I may have translated

it. This is certain, however : he looks for no let up in the present business depression, holding rather to the view that in comparison with what is to come we may eventually look back and consider these as very tolerable times indeed.

Mr. Sage says theories are all well enough, but the best frequently fail in practical application. That navigation never comes to a perfect standstill because apprehension may be entertained of a squall, and that people are not going to stay in doors all day because it looks like rain. He says that Mr. Sherman has been talking this way for ten years now, but that he for his part instead of standing round with an umbrella permanently hoisted with both hands above his head, has moved around and done business and made some money. That he thinks there is still room to make a few profitable turns before the world comes to an end, and that a business man always has to take certain chances. All of which seems to me so sensible that I'd be willing in the future to trust him with twenty pieces of gold without counting it.

Mr. Sherman's talk seemed sensible to me,

too—the most sensible of any I have heard for some time. And he talks with knowledge, understand, with facts and figures at his fingers' ends, and can give you a reason for everything he says. What is one to do when two such men differ about the future? Really I don't know, unless you follow the guiding rule of my life, and of two sensible men choose the less.

But now let me get my own oar in just once. It seems to me that a deal of liquidation has been going on which is not felt as yet. The liquid is getting pretty low in some reservoirs, in fact, and let people but discover just how low it is, and there may be music of a most unpleasant character in the air. To illustrate what I mean: Here at Long Branch is a cottage which with its grounds cost \$47,000. Last Summer a resident of the place—nowise interested in the property—urged a capitalist with whom I am acquainted, to buy it as an investment for \$45,000—at which price it was offered. This Summer the property was bought in by the mortgagee—a life insurance company—under a foreclosure for \$27,000. And they have approached my friend several times to

urge him to take the property off their hands at that price—the bare amount of the mortgage. But he does not see it, exactly.

Let our life insurance company be compelled themselves to sell that property—as the chances are that they will be before they're done with it—and what would it bring? Probably not the half of what they have been obliged to purchase it at. Now, here is but one individual instance. If you doubt that the bulk of savings bank money, and other money which may be suddenly wanted some day, is loaned out on just such fancy property, appraised originally at just such fancy valuations, just you go and make a few inquiries in a quiet way. And then come back, and tell me if a good many saving people should some day take it into their heads that they'd like to feel of their own money, and ask for it, what would be the result? Where would fancy property go to? And where would the few who had a fancy for buying a piece of fancy property, at what seemed low figures, get the money from to buy it with, notwithstanding that their bank-books showed a balance?

There is nothing like having a financial head on two shoulders, unless one has two financial heads on one shoulder !

I do not know what there is in my face which marks me out for a statistician, fond of figures, given to estimates, thirsty for all sorts of knowledge. But at very few hotels in the land have I ever stayed where the landlord has not volunteered to show me around, up and down the kitchen, through the laundry, into the meat safe, to make me familiar with all the penetralia of the establishment, in fact, but the money-drawer. It must be that I somehow look like a man who is fond of crawling through cellars and climbing over soap boxes, and stretching out his limbs in the shady recesses of a refrigerator. The gentlemanly proprietor of the West End is the last one who has taken me in hand. For some days I had noticed him studying my face curiously. At last he moved bodily upon the works this morning, and seized me by the hand. "All right, Sir ; the desire of your heart shall be gratified." I had a very sharp-cut presentiment of what was coming, but followed on in silence. In

five minutes I was in the fish house, in six I was in the scullery, in seven I was in the soap-room, in eight I was in—but why enumerate further? I was shown everything before we had done with it, but the bar-room. Likewise I was made acquainted with an admirable system of accounts, a system by which a check is kept on every one about the house but the head chambermaid—no system for checking a chambermaid has ever yet been devised. Thus, a piece of beef coming in is charged to the proprietor, he charges it to the steward, the steward charges it to the cook, the cook charges it to the pantry-man, the pantry-man charges it to somebody else, and then a guest steps forward and pays for it.

I have gathered items of information about the quantities of things consumed in Long Branch hotels, which will be of enormous use to me in after life ; items which will make me in the future a wiser and a wetter man. For instance, at the West End there are 21,000 toothpicks and one bottle of anchovy sauce used up in a week. A bar of soap doesn't last much more than a day. The average daily cost of feeding a guest,

taking one day with another, is ten cents a head. And so it goes on ; all expenditure, little or nothing coming in. Enough to discourage any man from keeping a hotel, unless he have either Mr. Hildreth's good nature, Mr. Presbury's respectable appearance, Mr. Leland's bank account, or the patience of

JOHN PAUL.

UP THE HUDSON TO SARATOGA.

THE NOSE OF MY YOUTH—ASSIGNED TO A
BRIDAL CHAMBER—THE POETRY OF IT—A DROP
INTO THEOLOGY—SARATOGA WITH A FRONT
TOOTH OUT—A BIG BAR—A MISUNDERSTAND-
ING ABOUT CLOTHES.

SARATOGA, July 17.



T is fifteen years and more since I have sailed up the Hudson.

Nous revenons toujours a nos premiers amours, says a proverb, and the proverb has truth to back it. Bald-headed, do we not return to the beauty that enslaved us when young? Is not mother earth a boy's first love? To her skirts did we not fondly cling when we planned out the business of the day; in her dimples did we not burrow when we made mud-pies? To her bosom do we not return when we die?

Years ago I became enamored of Anthony's Nose. Last night I embraced it again. No

change was there. 'Tis the only nose I know of, the azure one of Ocean alone excepted, on which Time writes no wrinkles. All other noses round me are redder now than they once were ; not so Anthony's. Nor has it increased in size. Wonder you that when one meets the nose of his youth—the only illusion that has not faded, the single and singular friend that has not gone back on him—he feels like having a blow-out?

Bring hither foaming, sparkling, brimming goblets of Congress water. Yea, of Hathorn, High Rock, Columbian, Empire, Geyser, Star, Excelsior, Saratoga "A," Eureka, Hamilton, White Sulphur even, and let us pour out deep libations while we grasp old Anthony's Nose by the hand and dance round the grand base which has never once been changed in a century!

Alone with moonlight and a memory, the same stars shining over us that shone 15 years ago—aye, the same stars that led the Children of Israel over the plains and in their courses fought against Sisera—a perpetual fountain playing at the bow where the swift keel divides the

waters and dashes them up in spray, the waves voiceless, the decks silent, and a hush in the air—is this not pleasant? Little white villages spring suddenly into sight on the river banks; now and again you come upon a cemetery, its pale marbles glistening in the silver moonlight; anon some iron furnace, its lurid fires lighting “the darkness of the scenery,” bursts upon your startled vision, and the boat shudders away down in the depths of her timbers as she leaps by the baleful spectre.

Who could leave such witchery as this for even a bridal-chamber. And on this beautiful night that chamber was mine. “Boffin’s Bower,” indeed! Boffin’s Bower was a fool to that which the kind fates upon this blissful night allotted to me. A ceiling fretted with

—roses,
The old agitation
Of myrtles and roses,

Cupids, with bows and arrows and festoons and garlands, and not much else in the way of dry goods to bother them, and doves with bills so

intermingled that they seemed but one, looked down upon me from that canopy of blue. Do you marvel, good friend, that at all these frescoes I gazed the night through and thought mainly but of that bill?

Look I like a blushing bride, that Capt. Roe thus roomed me? True on this eventful evening I met the love of my youth—not Anthony's Nose, but the star-eyed Hudson—my soul mingled with the water, and the water and the sole other element with which it should ever be mingled, became one. But I'm unaware that my face shone much more seraphically than usual.

There must be a certain poetry in my face, an eloquence in my eye, a vague, indefinite yearning upon my brow, that I should be treated thus. It may be that oftentimes a man possesses a grace whereof he himself knows not, that he carries within him a lamp unseen (or kerosene) to himself, but plainly visible to others, so that all get his measure at once. Looking at the face opposite me in the mirror, I should expect that a saddle of mutton would be set apart for me sooner than a bridle-chamber; but this only

proves how little men know themselves and how much better other men know them.

It may be that I got the best room on the boat because of trusting to Providence and not telegraphing or making a fuss to secure apartments before starting. Luck helps those who do not help themselves. In the lottery of boats I drew the Drew ; and having had sufficient for the day, I gave myself no concern about the night—did not even ask the watchman to tell me about it. Hoping something better, but conscious that I deserved nothing so good, and prepared, if need be, for something much worse, I was ready to lie down with the cot-forsaken* wretches in the middle aisle of the cabin if nothing better turned up. Look, mark you, how my patient faith and calm resignation were rewarded. And sometimes I fancy that our souls would get along better here if we worried less about them. Would it not be well to act on the belief that they're checked through and not worry about the baggage till our final destination is reached ?

* The Great Moral Organ thought cot-forsaken was a "cuss-word," and crossed it out off the copy they printed.

I didn't mean to drop into theology. How it thus happened I have no idea at all, unless the portrait of Drew, which graces the broad stairs of the boat of that name, inspired the train of thought. There you have a man who has attended to business right straight along ; occasionally he'd throw away \$500,000 or so on a theological seminary, perhaps, or pause in his good career to give a friend a point, but he didn't do it often. All his life long—ever since he was drover at least—has he not gone about doing good and putting his friends into good things? Has he ever stopped all this while to consider that he had a soul? Has the idea that he had one ever occurred to any body else? One says we are villains all, another that all men are liars, still another that all men are mad. There has invariably been a methodism in the madness of the good Daniel, however, and now the end seems near. There is no reason, young man, why your last end should not be like his if you do exactly as he has done—that is to say, if you consistently and persistently “do” others.

But why so much about soul when you are at Saratoga? Why dwell upon the Hudson when one is here? you ask. Surely the words of the old song, a song that was tinkled upon guitars when pianos were in their cradle, cannot have faded from out your memory :

My heart's in the Highlands,
My heart is not here :
My heart's in the Highlands
A-watching the steer,
A-watching the steer-
Ing of brave Captain Roe :
My heart's in the Highlands
Wherever I go !

Saratoga has changed in some particulars since last season. She looks like a belle who has lost a front tooth. On the corner, where the Grand Central last year stood, there is now a deficiency—as of an incisor. A black and jagged gap mars the clean beauty of the old maiden's front elevation. To offset this, though, the old end of her most righteous and sightly molar, the Grand Union, has been removed and a new crown built. The effect is incisive—fine.

In order to improve his property, Mr. Stewart has only ruined a church ; but that's nothing. You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, as Bismarck remarked. "The nearer the Church the further from God," is a popular saying ; and in this view of it, where could bar-rooms and billiard-rooms be more fitly situated than directly alongside sacred walls ? This door lets you into the bar-room, the door just above lets you into a Church. You see,

"There's a spirit above
And a spirit below,
There's a spirit of joy
And a spirit of woe.
The spirit above
Is a spirit divine,
And the spirit below
Is the spirit of wine."

Why are these great hotels arranged with the ladies' parlor at one end and the bar at the other ? Is it to drive young men to extremities—to force them to encounter blue ruin, take either horn of the dilemma they choose ? There is no warning sign on the ladies' parlor, but the other quarters are made conspicuous by a huge sign in letters

of glittering gilt. The sign can be read afar off, —and your nose will be red too if you approach it much nigher.

Oh, earnest thoughts within me rise,
As I behold afar
Suspended right before my eyes
The shield of that Great Bar.

I don't know whether that is Longworth or Longfellow. Ascribe it to whom you will; call the verse mine, if you like, and the bar my aversion.

It was my intention to say a great deal about the improvement that has taken place in Saratoga. To burn one hotel down and build another up was an excellent idea, but I cannot amplify upon it just now quite so much as I could wish. If further explanation of the why must be made, I came away from home without clothes. And thus far the most urgent appeals, by both letter and telegraph, have failed to bring me any. That the mere fact of my having accidentally put a letter intended for Mrs. Paul into an envelope addressed to another young woman fur-

nishes an explanation of the domestic reticence I cannot believe, for I'm certain that I made the thing even by putting the letter intended for the other young woman into the envelope which went to Mrs. Paul. Nothing could be fairer than a split like this, for certainly it carried with it no percentage in favor of the dealer! But there has been a silence in the air, a muteness about the mail, for some days now, and no clothes arrive. (I never could write worth a cent without clothes.) The simple statement that she had received a letter evidently intended for some one else in an envelope addressed to her in my handwriting, and the incidental remark that she would reserve comment till I returned home, is all I have heard from Mrs. Paul upon the subject. But strange to say, I have no bounding impatience to return home and hear what those comments are. There never was much curiosity about me any way, and in this case I haven't a bit. Much as I would like to gaze upon the innocent face of Jonathan Edwards, I still feel that it is better to postpone that pleasure. Being without clothes is something of a drawback to human happiness certain-

ly, but I'd rather be without clothes than without hair. And perhaps, if the weather warms up a little, I won't want any.



AFTER THE REGATTA.

SOCIAL CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE THE OARS-
MEN—A MAN IN HIS CUPS—SILVER CUPS AND
CHINA BOWLS—STEERING DOWN THE DINING-
ROOM COURSE—THOMPSON.

SARATOGA, July 19.

At once there rose so wild a yell,
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that fell
Had peeled themselves to spell Cornell.



HAT'S Walter Scott!

You'll find it in the Lady of Saratoga
Lake—long measure there, but common
meet her here. With provisions at their present
price I can't afford much original poetry. When
I do drop into it, just for old acquaintance' sake,
the bell will ring long enough beforehand to let
you get out of the way.

What a thing it is to be a "gentleman and
a sculler" now-a-days, to be sure!

C-O-R-N-E-L-L-L-L-L. As my English friend remarked, they made an L of a noise. Given an inch at the winning-post, they wanted a good many L's, and insisted on having them.

Saratoga is Golgotha no longer—not now is it a place of the Sculls. The collegians have shouldered their shells and vanished into their respective vacations. But though a week or so has silently sculled down the River of Time since the Regatta, and the wakes of the boats have faded from out the bosom of the lake, the ripple of the race still remains upon the town, ruffling the spring waters and agitating fair bosoms into tumultuous billows of tulle. *Écru* is no longer an outside garment. There is never a lady, young or old, in the village, to the manor born or only a “transient guest,” who does not wear *a crew* within. And the winning crew, of course.

The room formerly occupied by the captain of the Columbia was assigned to me on arrival. All its decorations are white and blue, the carpet, the furniture, and the frescoes. The single exception is found in my shins, which are black and blue, with tumbling over the wardrobes, and bu-

reaus, and base-ball clubs, and trapeze bars with which the apartment was lavishly furnished in honor of its former occupant. All the day long I sit here on the floor and think I'm a float, I'm a float—or a bobber, a bobber, which is the same thing on a fish-line. And at night I lay myself down to dream I'm a shell, I'm a shell. Waking, I regret to find I'm not, for I'd like to be made of paper and have some one to navigate me—a skilful hand could perhaps make my paper pass current.

The excitement has left its imprint on society. Young women no longer ask you for an arm ; it is, “ Give me your starboard oar, please.” Instead of proposing a walk to and through the hotels, they say, “ Let us take a pull round the hash cribs.” In the evening, not a waltz but a “ double scull race ” is suggested. After gliding gracefully through a figure or two of the Lancers, your partner, in a whisper, requests you to “ make a spurt at the finish.” When an awkward dancer trips he or she is said to have “ caught a crab.” A young woman no longer apologizes for her hair being disarranged, but says that her row-locks are out

of fix. The "Origin of Races" is asked for at the bookstores, and an impression prevails that the Darwinian theory solves the vexed question of the winnin' stroke. Sensible people are no longer said to be level-headed, but to "keep an even keel." A young man making inquiries about a girl whose figure pleases him does not ask what she is worth, but, What's her tonnage?

Amid this freshet of boating terms the good old Saxon and horse sense of the racing men shines out like a good word in a nautical world.

The mania has even infected hotel men. Good schooner-built Mr. Breslin got the fit on him and spent more money than I pay him in a week for regatta prizes—silver cups. A man must be in his cups to do that sort of thing. By way of encouraging this thing along, the captains of the crews held a meeting and declined the prizes with thanks. Why the captains did so—alas poor crews, oh—unless because the cups were empty, I cannot imagine. Had they been filled with Rhenish—ruddy Rudesheimer or amber Yquem—depend upon't there'd have been a pull for them. But no harm's done. Sooner than

see so many dollars' worth of silver go a-begging, I'll take it myself. Put the cup to thy nabob's lips, O beauteous Breslin, cup me, thou cupper of the period, and all your trouble's ended. Fear no refusal ; I will give bonds to take all in that line that is offered to me.

The idea of a landlord's passing round silver cups as big as spittoons, when he hasn't a bowl in his house ! Wishing bread and milk for supper last night, I called for a bowl of it. The waiter brought me a spoon and saucer, and said there wasn't a bowl in the house. To my hint that he must be mistaken, he responded by bringing up a darkey several shades darker than himself, who declared that the bowls were all done broken last year. The head-waiter on being summoned bowed gravely twice, waved his handkerchief, delicately perfumed with anchovy sauce, three times, and, as by magic, three slaves appeared from out a nebulous cloud of Nubians at the lower end of the dining-room, each bearing a bowl triumphantly aloft on a silver salver.

This morning, however, they again informed me that the bowls were all out—bowled out, I

suppose. Now, why not sell that silver and buy a few china bowls? By the way, there can never be a better place than this to remark, that Samuel Bowles is registered at the United States.

A sort of sea-change has come over the Grand Union dining-room. Here, too, you see the foot print of the regatta—if a water-bull may be allowed, and why not when sea-cows cut a conspicuous figure in natural history? Your proper course down the dining-room is flagged by relays of waiters, holding white napkins aloft. The starter at the door gives an initial flirt of his towel which fans you down to where you see still another white flag gleaming in a brunette's raised right hand ; for that you steer. Yaw to right or left and you're gone—you "foul" a lot of flounces and ribbons, or, worse still, sheer square into one of the peripatetic crockery crates that ply in wild majesty to and from the kitchen, bearing what viands and vegetables they don't drop down the bosoms and backs of the guests they encounter, to patient watchers and waiters already seated. This flag-station reached and you are signalled to move on to another ; and so it goes till

you at last get to the steak, winning the plate merely by a head—a broken head at that, possibly.

Ah, much do we miss Thompson, so long head waiter, or perhaps I should say to preserve the unities, stroke oar of the dining-room. He, poor fellow, has caught a crab—a bad one—and they fear its name is consumption. Never can his place at the prow be filled, I fear. A great many of the guests have lost their interest in eating, now that he's not here to boss the job.

His was the courtly bow, his the grand manner. It was something to be passed down the long line of heroes, descended from heroes, by the wave of his white napkin. Not a waiter in the dining-room but knew what that wild wave was saying, sister. Like Jullien's baton, the wonderful flourish of which defied imitation, no successor can take up the napkin when the master lays it down. Emulation is vain; hang up the damask alongside the fiddle and the hoe, good people. Far be it from me to discourage struggling genius, but better let Thompson's successor flourish shillalah, for nothing less will

keep in hand those subordinates who of old were held by but his glittering eye and a napkin.

Think not that a grateful feeling for favors in past times received moves me to this tribute. On the contrary Thompson was always severe to independent journalists, and he snubbed me often. One season he refused me a round table ; the next he took Amos from me ; still another season he put me at a table that had only three legs to its back. But justice shall be done though the ceiling of the dining-room falls. He was a wonderful head-waiter.

To return to the matter of bowls. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, they dined 5900 persons at the Grand Union—that is an average of nearly 2000 a day. Now it would be manifestly improper to expect a hotel-keeper to furnish so many bowls as that. Suppose all should take a fancy to call for bread and milk at the same time—2000 of them—why, we'd have to run out and borrow bowls, for I don't believe there are so many to be had for the buying in the world.

As to other changes in this dining-room, Wil-

liam, my old-time friend and waiter, has gone back on me, has learned to love another. But he consented to be "interviewed" on the piazza this morning. A bald spot shows on the top of his head, and he's going to marry. In the meanwhile he is waiting on a bride and groom, who have a private table set for them, that so he may learn how to behave himself when he too joins the noble army of martyrs. Comfortably off he was two summers ago ; now he rolls in wealth, which shows how sublime a thing it is to wait upon me several seasons in succession.

Amos is still on hand, and seems to feel as friendly towards me as ever. For when he waited on me by accident the other day, and I informed him at the close of the repast that misfortunes had come upon me financially, and I could not give him a *douceur*, as of old, he looked really sorry. So, I think, he sympathized with me.

This season I've not been very lucky at table, I never get the same waiter twice. Directly I fix one fellow with a dollar, he is transferred elsewhere—or I am—and there's a new

man behind my chair. There are more men in that dining-room, I find, than I've got dollars. Here you have the principle of the dear gazelle again—a principle which runs all through life—also, you have the tree and flower idea. “I never nursed,” etc. *Vide* Moore, if you want any more of it.

I sincerely hope that this letter will not get into an envelope directed to Mrs. Paul, and that the one intended for her will not get into the Great Moral Organ. Things are complicated enough as they stand. That telegraphed for trunk has arrived. It contains a hundred writing cards, a dozen collars, a dozen pairs of cuffs, a dozen pocket-handkerchiefs, and not a single shirt. Men do not live by collars, cuffs, and handkerchiefs alone. I'm no more fit to go into general company now than I was before. I don't know what you call this ; I call it, REVENGE.

BANKERS IN CONVENTION.

CAPITALISTS EITHER POOR OR MEAN—HOW A PROPOSITION TO PASS ROUND A HAT BROKE UP THE CONVENTION—THE DIGNITY OF FISHING—A CHILDREN'S HOP.

SARATOGA, July 22.



SARATOGA is brimming over with bankers and brokers, who have come to attend the Bankers' and Brokers' Convention which convened on the 20th. That you may not buck against them without knowing whom you encounter, they wear blue badges. Every delegate displays one, because they are given out gratis. A charge of a penny apiece would have given the manufacturer a profit and made buttonholes less blossoming with blue, perhaps. For who would have indulged in an extravagance so useless? Surely a man could remember he was a banker without wearing a seton of ribbon to remind him of it.

"What have you come together for?" I inquired of a proud millionaire.

"Well, to have a good time for one thing," he replied.

Unfortunately two things interfered with their having a good time. First, they had no money; secondly, they were too mean to have spent it had they had any. When the Convention promised to last too long and it became evident that neither pleasure nor business was meant, a cashier who had a pleasant cottage at Monmouth Beach and wanted to get back to it, proposed a contribution of ten dollars apiece for incidental expenses, and passed 'round the hat. It was like firing a double-barrelled gun into a lot of crows cawing in a cornfield. The Convention broke up in wild confusion, amid cries of "Put him out," "Deny him the privileges of the Clearing-house." "Mash his hat." A proposition to finish with a dinner this evening was carried faintly, few voting, fewer still subscribing for it. And it did seem ridiculous, the proposition to waste money on chowder, cabbage, pork and beans, and other sweetmeats, when a

Chinese puzzle and three cents worth of slippery elm will entertain a roomful for a whole evening.

Capital and I never could agree. Labor and it have been antagonistic ever. Money was long ago pronounced the root of all evil, and I don't like to see it sprout near me. Judge of my horror, then, when a broad-brimmed banker from Arkansas got up and said his name was Roots and insisted on spelling it out in full for the benefit of the Convention. What a turn up was there, my brethren. Were ever such roots played on capitalists before? And, what a hat! But, as was remarked in the beginning of this paragraph, capital and labor are very unlike. Thus a laborer is worth nothing if he be dissipated; capital is of no good to anybody till it is.

The Frenchman who said that the Lord showed what he thought of money by the kind of people he gave it to, was not far out of the way.

Fishermen are my friends. Call you fishing an ignoble profession? Of whom were the Apostles chosen? Eleven fishermen, if I recollect rightly, and only one banker and broker among

them. No need that I recall the business that fellow made of it, the commercial transaction in which he indulged ; the sorry way in which he discounted his own soul for 30 pieces of silver. In these days of inflation and cheap paper money the net profit of the transaction may seem small, but in that primitive era, before banking had assumed its present gigantic proportions, 30 pieces of silver were not to be sneezed at, and Judas probably got the credit of being a shrewd driver of a bargain and had a good name on 'Change.

Do you wonder that I indulge in this venom ? Consider the circumstances. I came here to borrow a little money of these congregated capitalists. None had any to lend. On the contrary, several wanted to borrow of me. One of them raked up an old indebtedness against me, an indebtedness I had forgotten, and which he ought to have. When a bank-balance is against one, he may surely be pardoned for losing his equilibrium.

But I must confess to an ardent admiration for the perspicacity of the really great banker,

personally inconvenient as it often proves. He gets at you in a moment, knows if you are to be trusted by looking at you, measures you mentally and morally by the application of invisible calipers. Reads he the indorser on the piece of paper which you present? puts he it to his eye? No, to his nose. Fact. It is recorded of a late eminent bank president that a bit of paper bearing the name of a successful dry-goods man, against whose credit never a word had been spoken, was once offered him for discount. Mr. President took off his glasses and laid them on the table; then he smelled of the paper and shook his head. "Too much horse," he remarked quietly and laid it down. Further comment there was not, neither was there discount of that piece of paper. The drawer of it kept 20 horses. In less than a month he went all to pieces. No need, you see, of a banker's having a good head; all that's necessary is a nose.

Notwithstanding that the charming coolness of the weather would seem to favor it, they do not dance here with the vim of former days. A few languid fossils go on the floor and keep step

to the music of the Union, and at Congress Hall and the United States a little tame hopping is hazarded, but there is not the swing to it of fifteen years ago.

The children had a hop on Wednesday evening, and this would have been enjoyable for the prettiness of the scene had it not been for the reflection that the little dears, hours before, had better have hopped into bed. Jonathan Edwards is but five months old and at present leads the French—his humid nurse from Limerick—considerable of a dance. But even when he attains to the full dignity of five years, I much doubt whether he will be permitted to lead the German. Regarding the future of Jona—but you know not all this while who and what Jonathan Edwards is. I plainly see that I shall have to explain this at some future time, for he is uppermost in my mind, and mention of him crops out when I least mean it.

A more sensible idea than a children's hop, lasting until near upon the small hours, is a children's lawn party, and this, Prof. Manuel informs me, is down for one of the entertainments

of August. A carte blanche has been given him, and the grounds of the Grand Union are to be decorated with all the resources of art. The sight will be worth coming to see. White dresses, and pink sashes, and red cheeks, and happy eyes, and little feet toddling over the green grass, with proud papas and magnificent mammas looking on, while Susan, omnipresent in her Swiss cap,

• A perfect woman, nobly planned,
 To comfort, counsel, and command,

wheels the baby barouche, or clucks her particular charge around her; much better this, I should say, than an evening hop. If children are to be hoppers, let them be grasshoppers. Immolate them not to the Moloch of fashion, upon a hot and waxen floor, beneath the glare of gas burners, and in an atmosphere made stifling by oft repeated breathings, but bring them out upon the turf, garland their pretty necks with flowers—and then do what you will with them, if they make too much noise.

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IN RACE WEEK.

THE RACES—LUCK—THE CROWD—NEW PHASE
OF THE SLAVE TRADE—THOMPSON'S SEASONS
ENDED—AN EXCLUSIVE SET—BELLES, BANKERS
AND LIONS—JONATHAN EDWARDS.

SARATOGA, July 25.

But Launcelot mused a little space :
He said, It was a lovely race,
Though Sharlotte got but second place.



HAT'S Tennyson !

There are few descriptions of a race anywhere, in poetry or even in good prose—which, after all, is the highest achievement of poetic excellence—finer than the one from which yon quotation comes. But Tennyson's strong suit was describing regattas. Remember you the single scull race down the river, the dead steered by the dumb, the entrance of Elaine against Guinevere and a sort of a dead heat of it at the finish ? Somehow I never could read that story without emotion ; unless I happen to

have two handkerchiefs with me I never read it at all.

But, to go on to what I was going to say. For a regular race, money up and no nonsense, there were never two finer races run than the first two of to-day—the opening day of this meeting. In the first race ten horses ran together so closely that you could have covered them with a blanket almost. In the second race four horses ran together so you could have covered them with a dinner napkin quite—had it been large enough. And in both races the favorites were beaten. Further than this I will not duplicate the descriptions that will have been before the public a month or two before this gets into print. But let me illustrate the luck which attends upon the heels of some men all through life. The point was out to-day to buy on Grinstead's entries—St. Martin and D'Artagnan in the first race—it being known that Belmont and Puryear had backed them heavily. This point somehow prodded itself into the ear of a man who knows nothing about either horses or anything else—not even railroads. Off he went and bought a big pool

on *Grinstead*—a horse in the second race—for fifty dollars, winning thereby about a thousand. Got the point stuck in the wrong ear, you see, bought another horse in an entirely different race and yet made enough to pay his Summer's expenses out of the mistake. There's no beating a man of that brilliant talent! Again, St. Martin didn't start in the first race. A gay old sport who had bought a pool on the *Grinstead* entries was furious and vented his indignation publicly—it was on St. Martin he had bought, D'Artagnan he would'nt have had at any price; he even offered to sell out at a small profit on what the pool cost him and a new hat—which he needed badly enough, certainly. Well, while he was going round in this way, St. Martin came in winner, and my shrewd sport picked up something over a thousand dollars. Call you this luck? Wrong, friend. Here you have life.

By the way, Bergh is in the burgh. What for, unless to put a stop to the races, I can't for the life of me imagine. If roweling a horse's side with a spur till the blood spurts is not as bad as peppering a pigeon's ribs with bird-shot, I'm no

judge of beef. If Mr. Bergh had but done his duty this morning and stepped in to stop proceedings, he would have saved me money, and to his praise this page would have been given. As it is, the sport will probably be allowed to proceed till I get on a winning horse by some inscrutable accident ; then a "squelch" will be put on the race when the winner is almost under the string. Here you have my luck.

Saratoga was never fuller and gayer than now, I fancy. Parlors, piazzas, streets, alike are full. All the hotels complain of being overrun, and the Grand Union certainly is, for to my certain knowledge it has been turning people away for some time past. (When a hotel wants me to go it has only to present the bill.) Omnibuses rattle up and unburden themselves at the doors ; nimble hall-boys fly round with whisk-brooms in their hands, eager to brush all the ten-cent pieces out of your clothes ; shouts for porter and chambermaid echo through chambers and corridors ; curses on the waiters fizz out, hot and steaming through the dining-room windows and in strange cadenza mingle with the music of Lander ; the

pool-room is piled high to the ceiling with hippophagous humanity, and even the springs are so crowded that the Dowager this morning only succeeded in getting seven glasses aboard before the surge that billowed up to the fountain caught her upon its foaming crest, and landed her, like a huge butter-tub high and dry on the top of the sun-dial outside. There she sat like a patient on a monument, smiling at lean people.

Rivalry among the hotels has ceased, and instead of spending their spare time in contriving how to draw people to them the proprietors now meet daily to discuss in earnest council the best means of driving them away. With the proverbial ingenuity of inn-keepers, they have already hit on some excellent devices for doing it. Possibly no adequate reason can be given excusing or explaining why the spirit of mortal should be proud ; but again there is no reason familiar to the common sense of reflecting individuals, why the spirit of a proud though erring mortal should stand more than a mule, and some day there'll be a stampede. I'm comfortable enough, for I'm rich. But trading in human beings was always

abhorrent to me, and long, long before the war, I came to the front as a most agitative Abolitionist ; now that the war is ended, slavery abolished and the Civil Rights Bill passed, I don't like to find myself obliged to buy a drove of darkies in order to get what I want. I have always been in the habit of securing a mortgage on one the moment I arrive at a hotel, but the possession of a dozen is embarrassing. The expense is nothing—I never take expense into account when comfort is concerned and they'll charge things to me—but the complications are annoying and frequent. In an eager desire to be of use to you, one zealous servitor takes away the dish which another has just brought, and between all these scamp-stools your dinner falls to the ground. To-day, in particular—

But of to-day let us not speak. 'Twas confusion worse confounded, and now comes a reason for it. Thompson, the old head-waiter, of whose dangerous illness I made mention in a previous letter, died this morning. The waiters are bewildered with grief, and several times this afternoon I have caught the proprietor of the house

drying his eyes. "He was a good man and a faithful man, and a most useful man to me," pleaded Mr. Breslin, excusing his tears. Excuse them not to me, good friend; tears oftentimes honor those who shed them no less than the ones for whom they fall. It is good to see the services of one who has filled faithfully and well a position comparatively humble, so humanely and heartily acknowledged by an employer. A tear on the grave of a faithful servant praises the living as well as the dead. 'Twill be hard indeed to fill Thompson's place. Even while he lay sick, dying, the fact that he lived and was not deposed from his authoritative place, exercised a controlling influence over the untamed barbarians of yon Great Sahara of a saloon. Something so the spirit of the dead Cid animated his followers, each hand grasped its good blade more strongly and eyes were steadier and courage higher when mounted on his coal black charger, firm in the saddle, his helmet plume nodding in the sunlight but visor down, dead, the Cid rode through the ranks of his army!

But though rivalry among the hotels may have

ceased to exist, it is by no means extinct among the guests. Each prides himself or herself on having at his or her house a more exclusive set than there is at any other. So Mr. Bowles, worthy man that he is, one whom you would think should be nothing if not Republican, after dining with me at the Grand Union, assured me that they had much nicer people at the States. To determine this it became necessary to dine with him. Immediately on entering the dining-room I saw that he had the right of it. First my dazzled eyes lit upon Judge Fitch, at the next table sat Jimmy O'Brien. A little farther along the battered nose of a veteran ex-pugilist lent grace to the picture, and not far removed from him you saw the lily face of Benjamin Wood paling its ineffectual chalk against the dead whiteness of the wall. After we sat down at table Price McGrath pranced past us, and anon came a Congressman. This filled out the canvas, and I acknowledged with a blush upon both cheeks that the States, as compared with our hotel, had quite a different set of people. Distinction without much of a difference all round.

Who ever knew a hotel refuse anybody's money? Really I should like to find one that would refuse mine—for, though by pride the angels may have fallen, it has never stood in my way much. Things and people will get mixed in life, especially at watering places. What says the hymn?—and let it speak also to her :

Though in this outward world below
The wheat and tares together grow,
A threshing day will surely come,
And then the tares will get teared—some.

Would you like to know who is here? This brilliant brunette, with complexion warm and clear as the tint of a damask rose, hair of her own so plentiful that women wonder and men admire as she passes, hair that defies any arrangement other than in those massive coils which so well become the wearer ; eyes of a hazel so dark that they border upon black, teeth not of the hue of pearls, but of a live color, and perfect in form—teeth that flash and mean something ; a step with a spring in it like that of one of the blue-grass racers out yonder in the Kentucky stables ; a curve of the graceful neck and a toss of the

head that show a temper which won't stand nagging or bullying—that is the wife of a New-York banker, and it is little wonder that people ask who 'tis, for a pleasant home and brown little gypsies of children occupy her to the exclusion, generally, of Saratoga.

This lady, whose gray hair circles her head like a crown, with a complexion fair and soft enough for twenty, and with dark blue eyes so clear and liquid that, looking into them, you see scarce more than sixteen years reflected—unless you happen to be fifty yourself ; this lady, who looks like a duchess and bears herself like one, is the wife of one of New York's most prominent lawyers. The lady with her, graceful and willowy in form, whose sweet but sad smile arrested your attention as we came into the room, enters with very little zest into the gay scene around her ; she tries to appear interested and amused, but you know that her thought is far away, that still she bends above a little grave in a distant church-yard ; in her eyes you see a longing for the touch of a hand that is gone ; in her tones is a yearning for the sound of a voice that is still.

Together she and the elder lady sit, mother and daughter, inseparable ; you seldom, if ever, find one apart from the other.

The young lady of the tall, lithe figure, promenading the parlor with her bachelor cousin, comes from a pleasant little village nor far from Northampton. If you sit on the piazza after the lamps are lit, and look into her dark eyes, young man, you do it at your peril. Many a collegian of Amherst would have stood higher in his class this year had he not yielded to the dangerous spell and endeavored to construe a glance in his favor when he should have been construing the less bewildering gerunds. If not a fickle wild rose, she's a wild mountain deer.

And you really do want to know who that other young lady is, slender, if not petite, in form, with face that reminds you of a finely-cut cameo. The dark hair clustering over her fair brow brings out its outlines in stronger light and adds to the classic beauty of each feature. Well, that pleasant-looking old lady by her side is her grandmother. A week and more ago a friend and I set determinedly about making the acquaint-

ance of the young lady. 'Thus far we've got no further than the grandmother—there we stick. So you may as well hang up your fiddle as regards any hope of scraping an acquaintance in that direction, George Augustus. Where respectable married men fail, what have you to hope for, young scapegrace ?

That tall gentleman who would be taller if he did not stoop a little, his incisive if not aggressive head and face thrust slightly forward as though to meet you in argument or repartee at least half way, his bright keen eye taking in everything that passes, yet betraying a kindliness in its depths that surprises those who know him only by his newspaper savageries, a man whom you would at once set down as decidedly out of the common, is the editor and proprietor of the foremost and best known newspaper of New England — *The Springfield Republican*. Is it not something to have established a provincial newspaper in a not over promising locality and made for it a National reputation ? The slightly grizzled mustache and full beard into which the chin vanishes with a Vandyckness, as it were, are

the gentleman's own, undoubtedly ; I hope I do not betray a family secret when I state that the full flowing hair, brushed loosely back, is a wig.

Yon middle-sized man, with red hair and mustache, nose on the *retroussé* order, thick neck, a head whereon a skating rink is in rapid process of construction, who stands a little lop-sided and stutters considerably—is Isaac Sherman, the great financier, with whom I am often seen in conversation.

Stop, look, we're in conversation now ! That man whom he holds by the buttonhole, the man with grave, thoughtful face, short, gray, full beard, pleasant smile, black coat, and altogether the air of the owner of a square pew in an up-town church—that is a man equally eminent as theologian and financier—even I. At this present moment we are not talking finance, but ventilation ; both our families are suffering from sewer gases, and we are preparing to enlighten the public on a subject whereon they should be enlightened, even if we have to encounter the rebuff of sulphuretted hydrogen at every step and the wet blanket of fire-damp at every bound.

The gentleman in a white flannel suit, all but the shirt, which is made of ruffled cambric, and the cravat, which is deftly woven of twilled jute, is the president of the New-York Stock Exchange. The gray-haired and gray bearded old gentleman to whom the president is expressing those financial views to which I always listen with awe and amazement, is the ex-president of a railroad that would stand remarkably high in the stock list at present had its shares but gone up within the past year as energetically as they have fallen. He is fond of euchre, plays a notoriously poor game, and owes me for three straight games which he lost, but for all that he shouldn't expect a man to let him deal all the while.

That babe with whom the nurse is perambulating on the back piazza, is—no, you reckon without your host this time. It is not Jonathan Edwards. Jonathan would not take kindly to Congress water, I fear and there are other reasons why he will not visit Saratoga this season—the most prominent one perhaps being that his mother won't come. Depend upon it you'll never see him wheeled

round in a perambulator, his nurse standing at his back. There's no premium for cross-eyed children that I know of, and if there were we wouldn't enter him for it thus early in life. Scarce a child do you see around the hotel that has not a Ben Butler bend about its lamps, all because of these infernal back-action perambulators. And in no respect does the child to which you have called my attention resemble Jonathan Edwards for Jonathan has the most lovely—

There, dinner ! You must wait to know what Jonathan Edwards really is like till another time.

FINANCE EXPLAINED TO FINANCIERS.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REACTION ILLUSTRATED—
STOCK OPERATIONS BY THE RULE OF THREE—
THE FAILURE OF A LARGE BANKING HOUSE—
FINANCIAL AERONAUTICS — COMMODORE VAN-
DERBILT AND CENTRAL—A SUCCESSFUL OPIATE.

SARATOGA, July 27.



HO will step aboard of your balloon now, Mr. Paul?" asked my financial friend, when news came that a great firm had failed.

With fine irony, Isaac persists in calling the present system of inflation my balloon. And this is the way he always approaches the subject when he wants to get at my financial views.

We were out on the race-course, and I was feeling badly. It was not that I had drawn Olitipa in a hat pool ; it was not that I had laid money on Leander when I should have chosen the Countess ; it was not that in the steeple-

chase I took Trouble and had only that and a pool-ticket for my pains ; it was none of these aggravations that weighed upon me. But my spirit was oppressed by the thought that possibly I had given my financial views in a late letter from Long Branch—very late indeed in getting into print — prematurely to the public ; that I perhaps, had precipitated a panic, involved “the street”—possibly some of the sidewalks, as well — shattered credits, destroyed confidence, moved banks to call in their loans, upset the balance of trade, interfered with the iron industry, done a good many other of the things which a man is apt to do if he doesn't shut his teeth together and carefully refrain from telling the truth. Sooner than have brought calamity upon the community in that way I'd have stayed at Long Branch, playing croquet on the sand—with hearts for balls and fans and clouded bamboo canes for mallets—even until now.

Sometimes I think I will never write about finance again. As for theology that is not for me in the future. It is quite enough to be bowling down long established houses in this way,

without bringing the established churches about one's ears in a rain of brick and mortar. Those who can't write without setting folks to thinking, and producing social and business convulsions, had better either not write at all, or else write for *The North American Review*, where they can do no harm.

Well, Mr. Sherman turned to me—we were sitting in the Grand Stand—and wanted to know who would step aboard my balloon now.

“Everybody,” I replied, “if only one fool can be found to lead.”

A drop of nine per cent in an eight per cent dividend-paying stock is a tempting thing. People are prone to “buy for a reaction.” Sometimes they get it. A friend of mine bought Wabash at thirty and it reacted on him so severely that within the month he went into another branch of business entirely—clamming. He was always fond of fishing, he says, and he finds health as well as a livelihood in his present employment. As compared with the trout the clam cannot perhaps be called a game fish, but then he doesn't react. In this respect he is

unlike my No. 10 Scott gun. That does. With only five drams of powder aboard, and not much room to stretch out in, it reacted on me the other day to such an extent that I went over and laid down on the other side of the lot, and it kept on reacting for five minutes or so—kicked me twice while I lay on the ground and a third time as I was getting up. There's a good deal of dicing and ornamental work about the stock of that gun, and a prettier piece of English walnut never you saw, but I don't put that fancy stock to my shoulder again in a hurry. And I don't get behind any fancy stock in the future if I can help it. Lady Clipper and Warlock reacted on their riders to-day. Warlock's jockey didn't get up as soon as the horse did. I'm not riding Warlocks now-a-days so much as I once was. One must have long legs when he straddles lightning, and then I don't know that he has an easy thing of it.

A friend of mine well known for his philanthropy as well as for the breadth—I might say the exceeding latitude—of his financial views (do I violate any confidence in saying right out that

his name is Briggs—Chas.F.—?) has one formula by which he figures up in a moment the worth of any stock on the market. Thus: "If a New York Central Railway First Mortgage bond, which only pays seven per cent. per annum, semi-annually, is worth one hundred and sixteen, what is a canal or telegraph stock worth that pays two per cent. quarterly? Easy enough to get at it."

And out comes a proof-sheet of an article in a religious Journal for figuring paper, and a pencil.

"A simple problem in the Rule of Three. As 7 is to 8, so is 116 to the answer. Here you have it— $7 : 8 :: 116 = 132\frac{4}{7}$. Any stock that pays two per cent. quarterly is worth $132\frac{4}{7}$, gentlemen."

I remember we once operated in South Carolina Januarys and Julys together, Briggs and I. Briggs did the figuring and I did the buying. They carried on their face six per cent. in gold, and sold at $62\frac{1}{2}$. Briggs's famous equation was this: "If New York Central stock which only pays 8 per cent. is worth par, what ought South Carolina Januarys and Julys that pay six per cent. in gold to sell for?" The gold rate fluctuated so frequently that it was difficult

to make an exact calculation, but where figures fail Briggs has a wonderful genius for guessing. And he guessed they were worth 85. John Swinton guessed they were, too, and bought a hat-full. Then we went over to Adams' Express—so called because of its irregular leaves, I fancy,—and told Gen. Sandford we guessed he had better buy some. But he guessed not. I thought he was mistaken then, but it has since occurred to me that possibly we had the wrong of it. However, do not let anything I may have said lead you to believe that my friend Briggs has not a great financial head. Daboll was a fool to him, so far as figures are concerned ; and when it comes to *The Wealth of Nations*, or *The Origin of Species*, the little treatises of Adam Smith and Darwin are literally nowhere.

As I was going to say, Mr. Sherman only asked me who was going to get aboard of my balloon, as the simplest way of getting at my financial views.

"Everybody will get aboard of it," I replied ; "everybody, not excepting Russell Sage." None of them want to go up in a balloon exactly ; it

isn't a through trip that they contemplate—only a little turn. Each man intends to get out before his neighbor ; none goes in to stay. The banker on this side of the way expects to step safely out, and, himself standing on the ground, see the banker across the street, who is not quite so smart, and will leave a moment later, floating about high in air. That the balloon may burst before anybody steps down and out, or get away with them all before the most timid sees that the ropes are frayed, is a contingency which suggests itself to none. “It's only for a turn, boys ; the gas is all right and with a ‘put’ for a parachute the fall will be easy to you at the worst—step aboard.”

“What do you really think of this failure of Duncan, Sherman & Co.?” demanded my friend petulantly. “These glittering generalities are all very well, but please bring your great intellect down to the contemplation of details for a moment.”

“Since you wish my honest opinion, I reply that the failure of this one house is a trifle in itself considered—a thread of very little importance

when separated from the complex web of the present and the future wherewith it is inextricably interwoven. True, as Briggs says, the failure of Duncan, Sherman & Co. will not reduce the earnings of the New-York Central Railroad or the Western Union Telegraph in any appreciable degree ; it does not in reality make the stock of either of those great corporations one dollar the less valuable. But that house was one of the great depositories of the surplus money of the public. Notwithstanding the immense crop of prophets after the event, which has so suddenly sprang into luxuriant life, that house stood a synonym for safety. I have never kept any money there myself, but I have always thought that if ever I had any to keep, to that house I would go with it. Now if it suddenly appears that a house which so long stood a seeming tower of strength, a commercial pillar on which it was safe to lean, if it suddenly appears, I say, that this tower, this pillar, has been honey-combed for years, dry-rotted at the base, what are we to think of houses of less character and prominence, of houses which there is more reason to regard as shaky ?

Where are we to put our surplus money? In whom are we to trust—I say we, but I mean they; they who have treasures of earth, vile dross, filthy lucre, spondulix, National currency, the ready? Suppose all these fortunate ones suddenly make up their mind that a man's money is nowhere so safe as in his own keeping, and ask for it at about the same time? The little stream that occasionally trickles through the walls of a reservoir is of little consequence in itself; it becomes serious only when viewed as an exponent of the mighty, but silent and secret force at work behind. As the forerunner of an army of waters, the herald of a break in the dam, it has a terrible meaning! At this time, when a vast amount of capital is lying idle because of the general unwillingness to invest, an unwillingness consequent upon a want of confidence in existing values, a failure of this kind has rather a serious significance. If to the distrust of investments you add a distrust of depositories, men may feel like putting their money into a dry goods box and sitting down on it—then you have a panic.”

“You have alluded to New-York Central sev-

eral times, Mr. Paul. Do you not consider that a safe security at present prices, Sir ? ”

“When you put this question to me point blank, Mr, Sherman, my position becomes an embarrassing one. You know the close terms of confidential relationship which have existed between Commodore Vanderbilt and myself, ever since he declared his famous scrip dividend of eighty per cent. As he did not inform me that he contemplated such a movement, I incautiously permitted myself to be caught short of the stock ; as you can readily imagine a sort of feeling then, sprang up between us, a feeling of love on one side and respectful admiration on the other which continues to this day. When you further know that after killing several respectable relative of mine above Forty-second-st. before the present Fourth-ave. improvements were completed, he refused to extend a side track out upon Thirty-ninth-st. where an aunt resided whom I could well spare, you will understand in some degree the obligations I am under to him. Nevertheless, common sense, justice, a sense of my own position, a consciousness of what I owe to the world,

all compel me to ask of you, calmly and dispassionately, if New-York Central be worth the price it has been selling at for some time past, why in thunder and the name of a most unconscionable Congress does it drop several per cent on the mere rumor of Commodore Vanderbilt's illness? If it drop on the rumor of his death, a rumor so oft repeated that the thing has become monotonous, a rumor which no one ever believes—how much will it drop when he really does die? And that he will not, cannot, live forever is reasonably certain, I think. Listen to logic. All men must some day die; the Commodore is but a man—therefore some day the Commodore must die! I hope I have proved this fact by a syllogism too clear and direct to admit of contradiction—for if it can be contradicted, his satellites will be round me in a minute. 'Tis a general impression, evidently, that when the Commodore dies Central stock will drop from ten to twenty per cent. Now that death-day cannot be very far distant. He is in his eighty-second year, and more signs of failing are evident upon him this Summer than ever before. Seldom if ever does

he go out to the races ; he falls gently to sleep in the afternoon with a good book either in his hand or by his side ; he has reduced the play in point-euchre from five dollars to one ; he does not disembowel his antagonists so completely as formerly. In brief, he shows signs of failure, mentally as well as physically. His nearest friends watch his health like hawks ; no one intends to have much Central stock on hand at the time of his death, but in the meantime pretty much all are willing to trade in it. They take the chances of an old man's life. But a feeble pulse, a fluttering breath, only, stand between many an operator and beggary ; yet they court the chance. To me it looks like skating on thin ice ; but—each to his own fancy. Now if New York Central stock be really worth its present price, tell me will you, why the Commodore's death should depress it at all ? Certainly the taking off of almost any other railroad president you can name would be a signal benefit to the road he represents. Do men of means, men of influence, men of brains, men like myself, in fact, propose to wrap the drapery of a stock around them and lie

down to dream upon it when its value depends so much on an old man's health, to say nothing of his life. If the stock had not been watered to a most unprecedented degree, if it, like almost every other security dealt in at the Stock Exchange, were not inflated, ballooned to bursting, would it echo every pulse-beat of its President? sink because he has a dysentery? rise with his recovery? I only ask these questions, understand; I assert nothing. But it does seem to me that only a terribly watered stock could be so wildly upheaved by a pain or pimple. If it cannot stand to-day on the merits of the road, if the direction be incompetent, and all hinges upon one man, be that man young or old, I want none of it. So with religion when it was claimed that its very life hung trembling in the balance of Mr. Beecher's innocence or guilt. If there were nothing of religion more than that, better far, it seemed to me, that the feeble light should flicker out at once. But the contrary was true. and more than this, I tell you, Mr. Sherman—"

A deep breathing broke on my ear. I turned round to see who had a fit. There sat my friend ;

a programme of the race in his hand and a peaceful smile upon his face, fast asleep, with his head upon Mr. Stranahan's shoulder—who was also asleep.

“How long have these gentlemen been thus comatose ;” I asked of a bystander.


“Ever since you've been blowing,” he whispered ; “don't stop now, or you'll wake 'em.”

But these are my views of the situation, and if the reader sleeps over them he may wake to a sad realization of the truth. I am sorry I was born this way, knowing nothing about anything but theology and finance, but I can't help it. Some pork will boil so.

THE SPELL OF LAKE SARATOGA.

AN EXCURSION WITH GOVERNORS AND ORTHOGRAPHY
THROWN IN—KAYADEROSSERAS—A LADY
AT THE SCALES—FINANCE.

SARATOGA, July 29.

EVER before have I been among so many Governors as yesterday. In the first place, Saratoga is full of Governors just now—I didn't suppose there were so many Governors in the world : Gov. Curtin, Gov. Hendricks, Gov. Anthony, Gov. Tilden, Gov. Hoffman, Gov. Aiken—of South Carolina, whose memorable remark to the Governor of North Carolina, that it was rather a long while between drinks, has passed into history—and he of Massachusetts, who is to be Gov. Rice, then we have Gover—but why twist these columns into a long string of Governors merely ? Suffice it to say that more Governors are here than you can shake a stick at. The occasion which brought me into

immediate contact with them was an excursion up the Kayaderosseras (a name with which you become quite familiar after spelling and pronouncing it a few dozen times) in Mr. Frank Leslie's steam-yacht. We had the whole string of Governors along, except Gov. Hoffman, Gov. Tilden, Gov. Hendricks (none of whom care much for the Kayaderosseras, but wouldn't object to being President), and Gov. Aiken of South Carolina, who preferred to remain and exchange suggestions with the Governor of North Carolina. As well as the Governors mentioned, we had a lot of judges, editors, and ladies with us. Among the latter I may mention—as prominent among them from first to last—Judge Davies of New-York, Judge Dan Dougherty—the Coming Centennial orator of Philadelphia, and Editor Bowles of Springfield.

The Kayaderosseras is a small stream, emptying into Saratoga Lake just above Mr. Leslie's grounds. The banks of the Kayaderosseras are green with summer grasses, and fringed with willows and other trees of beauteous plumage. But the chief beauties of the Kayaderosseras are the

shadows, the wonderful reflections of cloud, sky and bank, green grass and waving willow in the depths below. Fairy land is before you, naiads are round about ; the enchantment is perfect. Have we all been translated, ferried beyond the dark flood in this trim little yacht, a disguised Charon in the engine-room, and Gov. Rice at the wheel ? Are we among the happy drowned ? Lo, here is a world beneath the waters ; a world more beautiful by far than the world above. For the lights are softer, the shadows darker ; all blots and imperfections of the landscape are absorbed by the mirror ; only its beauties thrown back to you. You long to be a fish ; a red mullet, may be ; or, peradventure, a purple perch, that so you might browse upon the grasses, glide in and out among the submerged groves, climb into the tops of the trees to roost, perchance to dream. Until now I had never heard of the Kayerdos—Kaycleros—Kerdayro—Kaserdos—

Bless my soul, I've got lost ! Let's take a fresh breath and begin again. Steady as you go, boy.

Never until now had I heard of the K-a-y, Kay, a, Kaya, d-e-r, der, Kayader, o-s, os, Kay-

aderos , s-e, se Kayaderosse, r-a-s, ras, Kayaderosseras. There you have it, straight as a string, or a mackerel, or the whisky that Governors drink—and they wouldn't drink crooked whiskey, of course. So enraptured was I with the beauties of the stream that I contemplated a poem in its honor, and indeed began one. But alas! to Kayaderosseras no rhyme but Rhinerosseras suggested itself, and there are — or should be — bounds to poetic license when the liberty of Mrs. King's English is at stake.

Surely, had the Lady of Shalott only had the Kayaderosseras for her magic mirror, never would she have complained that she was "half sick of shadows." Contentedly she would have sat, throwing the shuttle and singing her song, leaving "towered Camelot" all unheeded. Of the sad Lady of Shalott I thought as we floated along the river. To the bank I looked, if haply I might catch the glitter of the blazoned baldric,—the echo of the silver bugle, the rapid rataplan of the burnished hoofs whereon the war-horse trode, of bold Sir Lancelot. Even as I gazed

From the bank and from the river,
He flashed into the crystal mirror;
Tirra lirra, by the river,
Sang Sir Lancelot.

Never before was seen so nice a knight of a Summer afternoon. But alas! all that's bright must fade! Another little steamer dashed into the little stream—

Out flew the web and floated wide
The mirror cracked from side to side.

Vanished was the enchantmen ! gone were the shadows. (From the statement that the Web flew out and floated wide, however, do not conclude that I jumped overboard.) Patience is a virtue which comes with age. The shattering of any illusion is simply a disarrangement of surfaces, which time very soon sets right again if we only trust to his kindly offices. The steamer puffed herself away in a "jiffy," the circling ripples of her wake sank one by one from sight, and almost before we had learned that our world below the waters was all unreal, a cheat, phantasmagoria, we had it around us again more beautiful than ever. The reinstated shadows bowed to us and

we to them, and the old-time terms were renewed ; again I took a shadow to my bosom, and the shadow embraced me back, each thinking—or making believe to think—the other real.

Kayaderosseras—that's a corker for thee, good printer. I will not revile, even though thou mak'st me spell it a half dozen ways in as many lines !

The beauty of Saratoga Lake is indeed exceeding. And if the fashion of villas upon its banks, which Mr. Leslie is spending considerable money in setting, ever become at all popular, Saratoga life will have a new meaning. The thing now needed is a narrow-gauge railroad—one could be built and equipped for \$12,000 or \$15,000 a mile, and the distance is only three or four miles. Then you may depend upon it that the tour of travel will be turned hither from Switzerland—if only tourists can in a reasonable time learn to spell and pronounce Kayaderosseras.

If a railroad ever be built I hope the builders will pattern after the elevator at the south end of the Grand Union, rather than after the one at the north. The former is an express train,

the latter an accommodation. Married couples, old maids, and old bachelors take the express. It elevates them without loss of time. From supper you get to sleep in something less than a minute. But the accommodation tarries for wood and water at all stations ; it makes a long story of every story it stops at on the way up. There is ample time for the young man to tell the young woman why she ought to marry him, and for the young woman to explain the many reasons why she won't, long before the end of the journey is reached. A hand can be squeezed all out of shape between each landing—unless it's twice as big as mine. About the express there's no such accommodation. Again, they've got a sort of a deaf non-conductor on the slow elevator. Now, if they'd only select one who is blind as well, then, ah then, indeed, if contentment there be in the world, the heart that is humble (and contrite) might look for it here.

But it is dreadful to go up with a young lady on the accommodation and find papa, who started by the express at the same time, waiting at the

landing, ready to shut down on you like a cellar door on a boy's thumb. Talk of a mother-in-law's being unpleasant to encounter—it is the father in fact who to me is the more terrible than an army with banners.

But there are many beautiful drives to and around the lake. One of them is strangely like life. For it has ups and downs, now green glades and again but barren reaches. Here you bowl along right merrily; there you drag in sand and your wheels revolve slowly, wearily; worry and enjoyment alternate all through, and a sulphur bath awaits you at the end.

As for bathing in the lake, that can be had if you want it. Not exactly such bathing as at Long Branch, perhaps, but if for that you long, art can supply a counterfeit. For a sum comparatively small it were possible to hire a laborer to shovel sand into your eyes and ears, I imagine, and as for salt water, you might pour that down your own throat by the aid of a funnel without much outside help, if any.

The poetry of the lake is hardly complete without a beautiful Indian girl, bright Alvaretta

or somebody else, in a birch-bark canoe. But Sarah, the old time belle of the Encampment, the only aboriginal woman who could fitly fill the bill is married. She is fat, too. The form once fairy would now fit the canoe too well and she couldn't paddle so well as she could waddle. Why do beautiful girls, Indian-bred or Rye, marry and get fat? Anacreon's self couldn't write a woman up if she insisted on so pulling the scale down. Only two short Summers ago I wrote a lyric to this same Sarah. It began :

She is young,
She is fair,
With a rose on her lips,
And a rose in her hair.

How are the lines to be modified to conform to present conditions? Were she a widow 'twould be easy enough to say :

She is young,
She is fat,
With a weed in her mouth,
And a weed in her hat.

But she's not a widow—*ay di mi Alhama*
Sometimes I say in my haste that I will write

verses no more, but just confine myself to magazine articles, editorials, and such stuff.

Apropos of *avoirdupois*, yesterday a friend and myself guessed on the weight of a lady who said she had that morning been weighed. My friend guessed within a pound ; I hit the exact weight to an ounce. He declared that I had seen the lady weighed, and would not be persuaded to the contrary though I gave my word. Now, to tell the truth about it and explain the accuracy of my guess, let me confess ; I did see her wade—at Long Branch !

The idea of appealing to me regarding a lady's weight—though indeed, I ought to know something about it, having been made to wait by and for them, long and often. But if one knows something about anything, it is taken for granted that he knows something about everything. Because I'm well up on Finance it by no means follows that I'm *au fait* in French. However, over on an opposite corner is displayed a sign, "Moschowitz"—name of fearful sound and dreadful meaning, to husbands—"Dealer in Robes and Confections. Why does every one come to

me, to find out what is meant by "confections?" I should say at a rough guess that it must stand for some sweet thing in bonnets, but I'm not a walking Spiers and Surenne for all that. Confections in this instance is not sweetmeats, sure. The French spell the like of that, confitures. It is absurd of them to do it that way, I know, but what would you expect of a nation that spells hat c-h-a-p-e-a-u? They have no spelling-schools in France, more's the pity. And I'm afraid that a good many of them would have to sit down on Kayaderosseras.

It seems to me there's a change come over the lake in one respect—fewer persons are seen at Moon's and Myer's. Where they go to is a mystery to me. There's quite as much "hitching up" as ever, carriages begin to trundle away from the hotels at about four in the afternoon, dog-carts roll off on yellow and red wheels as usual, but drive out and you do not find the occupants at Moon's. Follow on and you don't even find them at Myer's. You can't find them anywhere. Not as of old do they sit on the piazzas and swallow, as formerly, fried potatoes in a

gorgeous sort of way. Not as of yore do you see two souls with only a single straw and a sherry cobbler between them, looking out upon the lake, what time they gaze not one into the other's eyes. Sometimes I fancy that here we have the beginning of that contraction which Mr. Isaac Sherman talks about; that those who go to drive take their own lunches with them, and sit on stumps by the road-side, eating cold boiled potatoes and cheese, moistening their palates perhaps with lager to the manor borne.

Where this contraction is to end puzzles me. Ever since Mr. Sherman began preaching contraction to me, ever since I met him at Long Branch, in fact, I've been contracting all that I possibly could. I've contracted debts on all sides, to say nothing of the contraction of more bad habits than you could stack up in a tēn-acre lot; but I'm no nearer specie payments or perfect bliss than ten years ago—not so near, if anything. Impressed with the worthlessness and immorality of "rag money," I've got rid of it as fast as possible; have even assisted my financial friend in getting rid of some of his, putting it upon

French pools in the name of Jonathan Edwards, for instance. I've bought neither stocks nor real estate, for Sherman has so shaken my confidence in values that I do not intend to throw money away on perishable property when split bamboo fly-rods can be had for forty-five dollars apiece. Still, stocks keep going up, and I cannot yet afford to go fishing.

Last Sunday instead of going to church I foolishly went over to the United States and heard a lot of big bondholders—the Hon. Chester Chapin, the Hon. Richard Lathers, and my Gamaliel, Isaac Sherman—discuss finance. They proved plainly that the poor are the creditor class, the rich the debtor class, contrary to the common idea about it. But at the end of the conversation I couldn't ascertain that any one of the three capitalists who took part in it owed me anything. An indebtedness existed by their own proving, but the only one who put his hand, into his waistcoat pocket was the Hon. Mr. Lathers, and that was to take out Adam Smith on Political Economy. President Chapin didn't even by way of squaring accounts offer me

a pass over his railroad. I'd have called it even at that; every one else perhaps would have called it odd. Sometimes I think I'll abandon finance altogether and devote myself to French.

THE SELFISH SARATOGIAN.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A BORE—THE MAN WHO WANTS TO SLING HIS SCIATICA AT YOU WHEN YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR RHEUMATISM—AT CROSS PURPOSES WITH A YOUNG LADY.

SARATOGA, Aug. 1.



OME one defines a bore as The man who talks about himself when you want to talk about yourself!

Saratoga is full of these wretches, this season. I came here prostrated by overwork, suffering from inflammatory rheumatism, tortured by inopportune neuralgias, unable to eat, drink or sleep, and quite sure that I had some chronic affection of the heart, to say nothing of minor domestic afflictions which frequently caused me to turn wistful eyes towards that burn from which it is said that "no traveller returns." Among

the many friends here sojourning it seemed that I must find sympathy; my livid imagination pictured the long piazzas as lined with rows of yearning acquaintances sitting backward tipped in their chairs but with ears cocked forward and laps all spread for me to approach and pour out my woes.

Well, what was the disappointing fact? Immediately on arriving I sought out Dusenbury—rather, perhaps, I may say that I saw Dusenbury his feet comfortably and decently elevated on the top rail of a chair, seemingly laying back for me. Him I approached, bearing with me, as a sort of propitiatory offering a Reina Victoria (of that brand whereof you can only get two for a half, though you take a dollar's worth), which he accepted without the least hesitation or symptom of mental confusion. Nay, more, he asked after my health, and took the last match I had, in the kindest way. Then conversation began. But barely had I set forth how a cold had come upon me in the Spring, a cold which finally settled down all over me, and of late had excited the apprehension of friends—many

of whom were fearful that it would not carry me off—barely had I got that far—not a word yet about my rheumatism—when he began on me with his sciatica. I couldn't get my shoulder blades in edgeways. Such an egotistical ass I never saw in my life. Politeness compelled me to sit still and listen to him, but on another occasion of the kind I shall rise and excuse myself, at the risk of being considered rude. Why, by the way he went on you would have thought that I came to Saratoga wholly to hear about his cursed sciatica—which I do hope will tie him up in a double bow-knot before it has done with him—when the fact is that my only object in coming was to tell him about my rheumatism !

So it is all through. Last evening I promenaded with a young lady in whom I fancied I had found a congenial soul—*feme-sole*—but disappointment was again my doom. The Perfidy of Man was my theme, and a flagrant instance, in which I had been the victim, was in my mind. Of course, I began by advancing a general proposition as to the Perfidy. Her dark eyes turned upon me like—ah, have you ever stood by a

still mountain lake and looked down into the shaded depths? And what saw you? Well, looking into this young lady's eyes I saw myself mirrored there, it seemed, and when one sees one's self in another's eyes he is apt to think that sympathy is shining all around and the rest of the story is as easy as rolling off a log. So I went on about the Perfidy of Man. And she pressed my arm at particular passages, while deep sighs agitated her tumultuous tulle. When I spoke of the woe which possesses the human soul when it finds that it has pursued a cheat, a phantasm, has held that as true which is really false and more fleeting than the ringlet born of a hot pipe stem, collapsing and straightening out like a shoe-string on the first approach of wet weather—when I spoke of this the double box-trimming on her breast rose and fell like the waters of a canal when a deep laden boat, drawn by a pair of spirited mules, plows madly over the surface and stirs up the bullpouts and catfish.

“Oh,” she cried, “then you know all? I had thought of speaking to you about it, but was restrained by the fear that you might think me for-

ward and unmaidenly, so I kept the secret (for secret I supposed it to be), and would not have spoken about it at all had I not discovered by your absorbed air and the confidence bestowed upon me this evening that you have detected his duplicity, and that I might come to you as to a brother and say—”

“Yes,” I said, “to tell the truth, I have longed for this moment. It has, indeed, seemed to me at times that without some relief in words—for men of my stern temperament, alas, are shut off by imperative custom from the relief of tears, debarred, sad to say, from the mitigation which weeping brings to lesser minds—I must fidget, fade, evanesce, droop, die ;—aye, pass in my chips, dear friend. For when it first flashed upon me that the false Fairtuther—”

“But his name is not Fairtuther, it is Dionysius Roberto Diffendroffer, and his behavior was such that it led mamma and me to believe—to believe—and now—now—oh, I shall die, I know I shall, for everybody must be talking about it, and that hateful Semantha Semithers says—boo-hoo-boo-hoo-boo-hoo !”

Beauty was dissolved in tears, and the true state of the case became apparent in a moment. While I had been inveighing against the perfidy of man in general, meaning my man in particular, and imagining that at last I had found a lofty spirit, which could leave the diminutive delights of the drawing-room, the poor plane of the parlors, and walk with me in the sublimated ether of my own experiences, verily the young woman was busy with her own wretchedness, was but brooding over a frivolous and uninteresting flirtation in which the birch-bark canoe of her affections came to grief and wreck upon some insignificant snag or sawyer known in the shallow waters around as Dionysius Roberto Dffen-droffer.

MINOR MANNERS AND MORALS.

CELESTIAL PHENOMENA ; RINGS IN HEAVEN—
QUIDDING AND QUOTING—CONTRACTION UNDER
DIFFICULTIES—FASHIONS IN WEAR OF WOMAN'S
HAIR—A PLEA FOR THE WAITER AND CHAMBER-
MAID.

SARATOGA, Aug. 3.

"Last night I saw the old moon, mother,
With the new moon in her arms."



NOT that exactly, but last Sunday we did see something which quite as certainly portended foul weather. A great luminous ring, glowing with all the opaline lights and tinted fires of a rainbow, surrounded the sun. And not far distant from the first, but totally distinct, a second and a third ring hooped great disks of heaven in.

The sight was strange to me, and the oldest inhabitant with whom a special interview has

been had apropos of the phenomenon, answers all who ask that never before has he seen anything of the kind. He thinks it a harbinger of the discovery of another mineral spring. Various explanations of the phenomenon have been had on all sides. One gentleman who had just taken an unusually large draught of Hathorn water, thought that we but saw the iridescent ghost of Andy Johnson swinging round a shining centre in infinite space. It has been very universally remarked that 'tis little use to break up rings here on earth if they are to be inaugurated above, and that it is hard lines indeed if one cannot get to heaven without the intervention of a ring. A scientific gentleman from Georgia said that the phenomenon was wholly due to an aggregation of watery particles in the atmosphere, an aggregation which, conglomerating around the sun, absorbs its scintillations, and so by a very simple and well known law of refraction, causes a disintegration of—of—

I don't remember exactly what, but if there's any virtue in polysyllables it must have been something nice, and everybody has reason to be

satisfied. It is not quite clear to me, however, that I caught the idea exactly.

But to-day we all know what was meant. It is dark, cold, rainy. The piazzas are deserted and folks sit indoors, listening to music in the parlor, where cheerful fires are lit. The race set down for to-day is postponed, and on all sides you hear the remark, "What a dreadful day!" Not so to my thinking. The darkened sky gives grateful relief from the glaring sun, which for days and days has hung over-head; and to see the streets empty for once is pleasant. Then, on a day like this, one can go to his room and indulge in moral reflections or write a confusing article on finance.

I've been morally reflecting all the morning, my own shortcomings the theme. It seems to me that my most besetting sin is the habit lately acquired of beginning all serious essays with a line or two of poetry from some high old bard whose distant footsteps echo down the cullenders of Time. Quoting is like chewing, I fancy—the habit once acquired is indulged in unconsciously. So confirmed has it become upon me that I

really am not happy unless I have a quid of a quotation in my mouth. It matters little what the brand. If the Solace of Whittier be not handy, Emerson's Fine Cut will serve; failing that, Bryant's Century, Longfellow's smooth Cavendish, or Stedman's Honey Leaf come to be rolled like sweet morsels between my lips; in default of other chews or choice I even essay to gnaw upon the plain plug of Walt Whitman. This habit must be amended—and I have made a note of it accordingly.

My mother bids me bang my hair.

Or does the poet say "bind?" If their mothers bid them do it, the girls are excusable—for girls should mind their mothers in little things, so as to earn the right to do just as they please when big differences come up—but if not they deserve to have their heads banged for their pains. There is nothing graceful in the fashion, every principle of art is violated, nothing of nature—except a suspicion of ill-nature, perhaps—is suggested. For the man who is bald way to his ears and half way down his back as well, to bang his hair for-

ward and so conceal the ravages of the moth and vandal as well as he can, may not be morally wrong, but the girl of the period should pause on the precipice of the forehead, if she do not come to a full stop. If you bang your hair, fair maiden, why not wear bangles as well? Both wears are Oriental. The Chinese virgin bangs her nut-brown hair over her almond eyes as a sign and symbol; the bang is a badge of maidenhood, corresponding to the snood of the Scottish lass. The Buddhist bangs you a bang for use and not for ornament.

But bad as this imported fashion is, I do indeed think it preferable to the plastering down of the hair in wavy lines and scollops so much affected by women of the day. They think it nice, undoubtedly, but it looks nasty, and one thinks but of glue and gum as he gazes. A style more unbecoming to the contour of the human face could not be devised by the most diabolical ingenuity. The idea of thus plastering down what was intended to be free and flowing, of arranging in set scollops that the charm of which consists in its very unconfined-

ness and irregularity, of depriving the crowning glory of a woman's head of all its life and spirit, is repugnant to all the canons of good taste. Out upon you, women ! Why will ye thus deface the temples which the Almighty made beautiful ? You ask to be allowed to vote, clamor for admittance into colleges, demand that you shall assist in the making of laws, knock at the doors of the learned professions, and growl if they be not opened unto you, shriek out to the stars a wild complaint about being downtrodden, and yet come gotten up in this most outrageous guise ! Think ye to fill the chambers of the brain with languages and ologies ? Why not learn to arrange the *out*-side of your heads decently and becomingly before bothering much about the *in* ? If you must scollop something, scollop your brains, good sisters ; plaster them down in fanciful curls and quirls ; but let your hair float free. Glue your morals to the mast, if need be ; gum your manners into symmetrical curves and angles, but let your locks have a comfortable looseness of look. Pretty pictures you'd be, indeed, parading to the polls,

prancing about in the pulpit, blustering at the bar swinging the scalpel in the dissecting-room with banged or scolloped hair! I'm not a savage but never do I see a woman with her hair so arranged that there does not come upon me an eager desire to scalp her, to part her hair properly in the middle—with an ax; either to murder her or marry her to a barber.

Now, I shall leave by an early morning train. Wrath at the way these women fix their head-gear has been seething deep down in my coppers for some time, and, at last it has boiled over. The result may be foretold. My hair would be scolloped before another sun set on Saratoga did I remain; on me would the women all sit down severely; not those who scollop their hair only—the whole female tribe would be my enemies in the future. Attack one woman for a folly, and do you not challenge all? For if a woman do not scollop her hair, the chances are that she does something else equally bad or much worse. Encourage a man to make a raid upon one folly, and who of the sex would be safe? Criticism must be suppressed, all advice repell-

ed, the whole female brigade must form in hollow square and bristle on every side with bayonet-thrust of action and saber-cut of speech, or the line is carried, and the traditional right of woman, which dates back to the fig leaf, to disfigure herself at her own sweet will, becomes a figment purely of the past. In this banding together for defensive purposes the sex are moved by a spreedecore, perhaps, a spree which began with the eating of the apple by the primeval pair and continues on even down to the present miscegeneration. Thus, if I pitch into a foolish virgin from Virginia, who sits with the motto of her State—a *Sic semper*—on her face from dewy morn to silent eve, some maiden from Maine invariably rushes to the rescue, eager to shiver a pine lance in defense of something or some one she knows and cares nothing about.

This moral reflecting, with steam turned on in the heaters, and gas-pipes which simulate hickory sticks burning brightly in the parlor grates, is very pleasant. The cold and rainy weather of to-day is, indeed, in strange contrast to the sunniness which has been the rule until now.

In this climatic change Isaac Sherman thinks we have the contraction which he has been foretelling. For cold is contraction, sunshine expansion, he says, and the signs of the times are visible on all sides. In an aquarium yesterday a mud-turtle drew his head into his shell, when Mr. Sherman poked him with a cane. "Wise fellow," said my friend; "he sees the necessity of contracting." The waiter this morning brought the Great Contractor a beefsteak, about as large as a lead pencil and rather thinner than a wafer it was. "Isn't this a little too thin?" he asked, in expostulating tones. But when Scipio Africanus explained that this was but the beginning of a healthy and inevitable contraction, and that the day was rapidly dawning when that beefsteak, now scorned for its size, would seem comparatively as big as a dinner-platter, my friend seemed satisfied. Not so the waiter, however, when the Contractionist of the Period handed him a ten-cent piece instead of a quarter, and, after this practical illustration of his hobby, mounted it and rode to Washington and back. I may be wrong about it, but I fancied that Scipio looked black when we left him.

The boys of the dining-room do not like contraction: they can see no necessity for it and no fun in it, either. Just as much money in the world now as ever: all very well for Massa Sherman to talk 'bout rag-money, but it buys dry goods pretty good: men's stomachs do not contract at all; takes just as much to fill'em as ever, they urge. In the face of all these facts their perquisites are cut down: they still have to feed the many, but seldom get feed themselves in return, and they won't stand it much longer, they say.

After faithfully trying it on for a week or two, I am free to confess that contraction in the matter of tipping the dining-room boys doesn't work well. The result of such an experiment is a long while to wait and nothing to eat. I contrived a rather neat way of flanking the difficulty, securing, as one might say, the consideration bestowed upon a cheerful giver without bringing upon myself the impoverishment consequent on really giving, by taking one of the new fifty-cent pieces ostentatiously from my pocket and putting it conspicu-

ously under an inverted tumbler. Magnified by the convex bottom of the glass it looked larger than a dollar. Dinner came as by magic ; fish followed upon the soup with the celerity of indigestion after cucumbers, and at the fish's tail came a long and a glorious procession of roast meats, entrées, vegetables, and several kinds of dessert—whipped creams and the like. (If every one had his dessert, as Shakespeare says, few creams would 'scape whipping!) Well, there never was better service than I got for a while. Then, when dinner was done, I did the waiter who brought it, by quietly taking the National currency from under the tumbler and returning it to my pocket, counseling William, as I arose from the table, not to sink any money which others might give him in French pools. But you can't play a spot ball of that kind more than a certain number of times. They come to know you after a while, and then it would be thought that your table had the small-pox, by the way the boys in black avoid it. So I had to return finally to the old-time plan and pay honestly and squarely for all service rendered.

Why should one not? What is the use of standing on a point of principle and going hungry in the midst of plenty? Better follow the custom of the country and do as others do. The expenditure involved is small; the inconvenience entailed by an avoidance of it is great. Perhaps it is wrong to bribe a waiter to bring you that for which you pay the landlord. But take another view of it; place the transaction on a different basis. You never refuse yourself the pleasure of "treating" a friend because it costs you something. Just consider Amos, William, or any one of the boys your friend, and "treat" him accordingly. Instead of fooling quarters away in drinks for those who need them not, place them where they will do the most good to yourself as well as to others. "They also serve who stand and wait"—let the waiters have a little loose change once in a while. Here is the chamber-maid, too, who assiduously hides your slippers where you can't find them; turns your night-shirt wrong side out most carefully before putting it away; fills the match-safe with once-used matches; piles the papers, which

you have carefully separated, into one promiscuous heap ; forgets to fill your pitcher ; dissipates mildly upon your hair oil—refuse not to make this chamber-maid happy occasionally by a slight remembrance. A greenback will be green in her memory forever. Avail yourself not of the old injunction, “Be just and fee ’er not,” but pay over your money and look pleasant. So shall your days be long in the hotel, and so shall not your nights be sleepless. For the chamber-maid can smuggle broken crockery into the mattress if she choose, and the sheets can be made to bristle with hair-pins as by accident.

But it is dreadful weather for a garden party, and I think a postponement of it is inevitable.

MY SON.

JONATHAN EDWARDS EXPLAINED—DISAPPOINTMENT OF MRS. PAUL ON FINDING THAT THE GIRL WAS A BOY—CONFUSION OF NAMES—A BABY'S FONDNESS FOR EXERCISE AND LACK OF MORAL SENSE—MY SON AS A HUMORIST—HIS TEETH AND HIS TROUBLES.

SARATOGA, Aug, 5.



AS I remarked in my last, it is dreadful weather for a garden party For two days past it has rained incessantly, and now, on the day appointed for the fête, it pours in torrents. My invitation reads; "Ladies and gentlemen are politely requested to dress in a manner suitable to the occasion. Ladies in walking dresses of light and gray colors: parasols of various colors."

Nothing could be more "suitable to the occa-

sion" than rubber boots and waterproof jacket—not a very picturesque get up, perhaps, but if the ladies also wear umbrellas of various colors the effect will be pleasing. And the substitution of umbrellas for parasols would not be a serious departure from the idea of the invitation, I fancy. But the indications are that our garden party will be postponed. On some sides a disposition is evinced to have it come off weather or no, but this feeling is noticeable mainly among the bachelors of the hotel, who, it is strongly suspected, would not object to a general drowning of the babies. Yet, of the two, which is of greater use in society, to say nothing of ornamentation, bachelor or baby? The floor is open to any mother who would like to reply.

The amount of patience which we bring to bear on babies depends very much on whether or not we have babies of our own. There was a time when I would have joined heartily enough in gentle Elia's traditional toast, "To the health of the much calumniated good King Herod." But that was before the advent of Jonathan Edwards.

'Twas a bitter cold day in February when Jonathan Edwards arrived—the bitterest and coldest day not only of the winter, but the bitterest and coldest since 1820, the chronicles said. And to be roused at an unseemly hour on such a morning, and started off on a most embarrassing and unnaccustomed errand, is enough in all conscience to disturb the spiritual balance of a nervous man for the rest of the day.

* * * * *

It was some time before I could muster the courage to ask whether I was a father or a mother—not that I had no curiosity about it, but because the treatment which I had for some hours undergone made it a question in my mind whether I had any rights which any human being was bound to respect, when a rather raised and indignant voice replied, “She’s a boy.” I felt that the supreme moment of my life was at hand, and that fortitude was necessary. For a most serious complication had come, trouble loomed darkly on both bows as well as dead ahead ; of this I was aware, even before I caught the soft gray eyes of Mrs. Paul fixed reproach-

fully upon me. We had half promised one lady friend that it should be named Louise ; another was happy in the conviction that we were to call it Caroline ; but deep down in the recesses of her heart Mrs. Paul had settled that the girl should bear the name of a great (and good) aunt, and glide gently down the stream of Time ticketed " Dorothy Jane." You see the dilemma ; all previous plans were disarranged—none of the names would now do. And thus it is that to this day the babe has but a *nom de berceau*, as 'twere—Jonathan Edwards. The fault is not mine, certainly ; but never a day passes over my head that it is not flung up to me that but for me the babe would have a name. And with each recurring dawn the question is hurled at me, " What do you mean to call him, anyway ? "

Sometimes I think of shaking a lot of good names up in a bag and letting him grab for one, so shifting the responsibility from my own shoulders to those of the Fates. Again, it occurs to me that perhaps 'twere only right to wait till he grows up, and then let him choose a name for himself !

In the meanwhile the boy seems to grow and thrive as well as though he had been christened George Washington or Julius Cæsar at birth. For his own part, he has never, from the first, shown much care about being named. On arriving at the hotel he made no sign from which I can infer that he was anxious that the register should be brought up to him. Lately from the tropics, a hot-air register would not have been unacceptable, perhaps; but as for immediately writing his name and place of residence, and final destination, down in a book, he manifested no eager ambition. His chief anxiety was about meals. Here was a hotel kept on the European plan, meals supposed to be ready at all hours, yet there seemed to be nothing ready for him. Little wonder that he set up a wail of vexation.

What a hurry and scurry there then was in the hall, to be sure! No need to carry the news to Mary; she and Nora, Bridget, Kathleen, and Kate knew it as soon as anybody; and they must have trumpeted the story through the resonant speaking-tubes, which lead all over the

house. For, verily, the chambermaids who came with dust-pans, and the firemen who came with coal-scuttles, and the bell-boys who came with pitchers of ice-water, were a sight to see. That they looked for largess because of what had happened, that they expected gratuities, cannot be, for they asked for none. But they offered fervid congratulations, and lingered round after they had spoken them, when there really remained nothing more to be said. Even the sparrows knew all about it, and came hopping upon the window-sill and pecking at the panes, not with an eye to crumbs, I am sure. Then, when I came to walk down town in an hour or two, the people in the omnibuses and on the street corners and in the club windows were talking about it and looking at me. "See! that's the father of the baby just born at the Quillsey House; there he goes; don't he feel mighty fine," they said—just as though a baby had never before been born. But the marked attention so liberally bestowed pleased me: not that I myself had any foolish vanity; but was it not a compliment to MY SON? Both nurse and doctor

said he was a fine boy, but when I came to make a critical examination of his legs, they distressed me. They seemed dreadfully bow. But this, I was told, is a peculiarity of babies. (Perhaps the bow shape is given so that they may lie by the hour and fiddle away at their heads, when they've nothing better to do.) His ears, too, in the dim religious light of the chamber, looked like crumpled rose-leaves. These latter are all smoothed out now, but in his legs I still see a funny sort of parenthesis. Experts assure me that they'll straighten out in time. I don't much care whether they do or not—they'll be handy just as they are when he comes to ride nail-kegs.

* * * * *

Sprawling about on a blanket, looking some like an under-boiled crab, more like an overdone cherub—this, then, was My Son! Here was the heir of much of my fortune and all my greatness, wrapped up in a square of cotton-batting no larger than a pocket-handkerchief. There had been long months of weary waiting and ardent expectation, most elaborate preparation had been made, and here was the mouse!

Looking at this shrimp of humanity, swaddled like a miniature mummy, little did I imagine the power which there lay latent ; little did I dream that those tiny arms—scarce larger than a pipe-stem—would in time come to pull me hither and thither, I powerless the while, as though swayed by the horses of Thrace ; that they would hold me back from my amusements, fetter me when I wished to work, keep me in doors when it was my will to go out, drive me out when I wished to stay in. But behold me now, the slave of that molecule's whim, the veriest creature of his caprice ! If he holds out his little hands to me, I must needs drop whatever I am busied with and take him. Work may stand still, but his sweet will may not be thwarted. And he is the veritable Old Man of the Sea. Once mounted on my shoulders, I cannot dislodge him. He likes walking ; exercise of that kind does not seem to tire him at all. I think he could survive being carried round the room till the ceiling fell in—his talent for that sort of thing is wonderful. Nor does he ever tire of the great moral drama. When I crawl about the floor on all fours, bark-

ing like a dog and arching up my back like a cat, he applauds vehemently. So when I bang my nose against the door, in an awkward effort to play bo-peep for his amusement—so, too, when I dance round the room on my head to show him how he'd look upside down—on all these occasions he is not sparing of plaudits, and he never fails to express his wish that the play should go on. Already I've worn out several pairs of trowsers, and am looking round for new properties—a false nose and a wig, for instance.

I have spoken of My Son as the Old Man of the Sea, but this was figuratively. At first coming, though, with his weazened face and wrinkled ways, he really did seem to be but a little old man. When he scowled at you, the suggestion was striking. As for interest in things around him, he had none. He had not the air of one to whom the world was new, but rather of one to whom it was tediously old, and neither amusing nor instructive. Even at the patent silver door-knobs, that wouldn't move when you turned them, and at the bright bell-pulls, that wouldn't ring when you pulled them, he looked as though he

had seen modern improvements before. If you spoke to him, it attracted his attention not at all ; just an indifferent gaze he gave you and turned wearily away, as though occupied with matters of greater moment. A joke was worse than thrown away on him. Though every one else might laugh, he but looked up at the ceiling and yawned, as who should say, "These jokes may do very well for you down here, but up there where I come from they have much better ones." Yet all the while it was plain that he was a first-class humorist. At times he would lie for an hour smiling away within himself in the funniest fashion ; catch him at it, and he became grave at once. It was as though he thought that that which amused him was too far beyond our comprehension for him to attempt to explain it to us, and he did not wish to be thought frivolous, so he checked his smile

The little sense of moral obligation that a baby has is a marvel to me. That he has any duties in life never occurs to him. In the present only he lives, with an idea evidently that nothing is expected of him but to grow. Where

his dinner comes from matters not to him, so long as he gets it. Though it may be that the milk whereon he rioteth belongeth of right to another baby, the ethical question which at once ariseth troubleth him not. He is reckless of results. Nor am I certain that he is not profane. When he mutters to himself in an unknown tongue, on being forbidden something for which he has alonging how do we know that he is not swearing? Possibly, however, he is only preaching to an ideal congregation, and is terribly in earnest over it; sometimes, in a real church, with a real clergyman, you know, we might, from the manner, think he was cursing us, if we did n't know what was being said. But the harangues to which Jonathan Edwards occasionally treats us are excessively funny. He becomes animated, and his gesticulation is rapid and expressive. "If we had another baby here don't you think he'd know what this baby is saying?" asked little Hal, one day, while we were listening to one of the infant orator's fervid exhortations.

Perhaps you wonder how we came to call him Jonathan Edwards. Truth to tell, I hardly know

myself. But the name somehow seemed to fit him. His face had a gravity seldom found in one so young. He had a judicial air, too, as though in his own mind passing on momentous theological questions. Pleasant his expression was, but to some extent severe. And this same air of dignity which characterized his infancy he still preserves at the ripe age of seven months. Approach him with a laugh, and he by no means responds at once in kind. No, no, indeed. First he looks you steadily in the eye, and apparently considers whether or not there is anything to laugh at—whether this smile which you bring to him is simply a stereotyped and unmeaning one, a sort of sheet-iron smile which you keep regularly on hand for all babies, or a good square smile, bearing a deeper significance. If the scrutiny be satisfactory, he gives a pleasant look and an approving nod, perhaps adding a few remarks intended to be reassuring and complimentary, but if not, he turns his head away and takes no further notice of you. Life is too brief, he thinks, to throw much of it away on those who smile because they can think of

nothing else to do, and, young though he is, he has no time to waste on those who do not really love him. I have already hinted that he is waggishly inclined. Often, when you hold out your arms to him, he will extend his in return, but approach to take him, and he turns his head cunningly away, laying it over his nurse's shoulder with a quiet chuckle as though to say, "Not for Jonathan!"

I do not know that ours *is* a pretty baby, but no one has yet had the temerity to say, in the presence of either father or mother, that he is not. It is certain that he has lovely blue eyes and a delicate complexion, and these go a great way, you know, in determining good looks. His hair, what there is of it, is of a nice color, and shows a tendency to curl; but we take no special credit to ourselves on that head as yet, and when photographed we clap a lace wig on him. For one so young, he is certainly very bald. As for teeth, they, like his troubles, are yet to come. How would he look with a full upper and lower set, in the last style of modern art (like the ever-new set in a dentist's show win-

dows), I wonder ? His figure is fine, though limp ; but of late his backbone has stiffened up so that he can sit on the floor without every minute lurching forward on his nose. This tumbling over was long a great grief to him, and I thought of ballasting him heavily below the waist like the toy boys you buy at stores, so that no matter how often he lost his balance, he'd at once regain an upright position without trouble to himself or others. If his nose is a little flat now, it is because of these repeated tumbles, but there is no question that in the fullness of time he will come to have a fine Roman beak like his mother's. And one thing is certain : whether handsome or not, he is good ; and in this and his baldness the resemblance between myself and son, so often remarked upon, is mainly to be found, I fancy. Certainly the ladies of the neighborhood are fonder of him than they are of me, and send in so frequently to borrow him that I am sometimes tempted to send back a polite request that they will get babies of their own. The idea of sending in to borrow a baby as they would a churn or a frying-pan !

The only grief that has thus far come upon Jonathan Edwards was early one-morning. It was very careless of the nurse. She had repeatedly been cautioned about lying down with the baby in her arms ; for that both had a talent for falling asleep we knew, and that Jonathan would be handy at rolling we inferred. Sure enough, after disturbing us all by ordering one of his early breakfasts on this particular morning, quiet had just settled down on the household like a blanket, when there came a most dreadful yell from the adjoining room, and, rushing in, we found Jonathan flat on his nose. (Somehow he always strikes square on his nose.) It was bleeding. Poor boy ! how grieved he was ; it was the only time that *hurt*,—out-and-out physical pain,—had come to him, and he didn't understand it. He didn't like it, either.

I took him up tenderly in my arms, but he would not be pacified ; aside from the hurt, I think he was indignant. And his nurse, poor Ellen, took on too, screaming and tearing out her hair by the roots, with, "Musha ! I've murdered me cheild ! " My soothing assurance

that I would murder her as soon as I could conveniently lay the baby down, did not seem to calm her somehow, and a terrible disturbance of the milk was threatened. But when Dr. Cook came, he said no bones were broken, neither was there concussion of the brain to be feared; 'twas only a concussion of the nose. As for Jonathan Edwards, when taken in arms for examination, he ceased crying at once, and seized the doctor by the beard with both hands; then he made a dive for the gold spectacles. And when nose was mentioned, he set up a crow as though he knew all about it and approved of the diagnosis. His lurches on the floor were not lost upon him. On the whole, it was a very good deliverance from very bad fears; and after thanking good Doctor Cook, we issued a bulletin stating the extent of the injury; every one went back to bed, the cook returned to the kitchen, and so quiet once more reigned on Cook's Point.

His beauty was not at all impaired by the accident. Baby's noses are made of india-rubber, apparently, and regain their shape with

wonderful facility after being flattened. That you may see this, and, further, that you may see that what I say of Jonathan Edwards all through has a foundation in truth—that my pen-sketch is by no means a fancy one—I inclose his photograph. It may not be easy to reproduce it, but perhaps you can print a diagram of him—give the front and rear elevation, if not a sectional view. I have pictures to spare, for when there's nothing else to do, his mother sends him down town to be photographed. And if any would like a photograph of the boy, I would not object to turning an honest penny by supplying the demand, at a trifling advance merely, on first cost.

THE CAREER OF A CALIFORNIAN.

FROM POVERTY TO POWER—AMBITION AND ITS
LESSONS—SUMPTUOUS LIVING AND MARVELLOUS
HOSPITALITY—THE BANK THAT AFTER ALL
WAS BUT AN INDIVIDUAL—ENORMOUS ASPIRA-
TIONS AND A TERRIBLE FALL.

COOK'S POINT, Aug. 29.



FROM mate of a Mississippi steamboat to head of one of the largest banking institutions in the world—undoubtedly the largest in this Western half of the world—seems a transformation dazzling and dramatic. But it was a gradual one. In this instance, as in all others, it was no royal road that led to position and power. The climb was a hard one and had its different stages and halting-places ; by no single bound was the height reached. Different indeed the fall. Yesterday, as it were, looking up, men wondered ; to-day,

looking down, they stand aghast. For one of the adventurous who then stood with feet seemingly firm planted high up the hill, which so many aspire to climb, now lies a crushed and shadeless mass at our feet. Less far indeed from top to bottom than from bottom to top ; for the one journey years are necessary, for the other a single minute suffices. It is very hard at just this point to refrain from preaching. But I will. The corpse found floating and drifting about the bay of San Francisco has been dragged ashore, and if you can look upon it without learning something, all that the ghastly lesson conveys, indeed, a sermon would but be thrown away.

William C. Ralston was the most restless and ambitious man I ever knew, and among restless and ambitious men my lot has principally fallen. As already hinted, his beginning was an obscure one. The precise details of his early life I do not remember, and will not endeavor to repeat, though I have had them from his own lips. But unless I much mistake, the banks of the Mississippi River were the only banks with which he had to do prior to emigrating to California in the

early gold days, and with these he had to do in the capacity of mate—some say deck-hand only—of a stern-wheel steamboat. To the comparative lowness of this starting-point; may we not attribute that aspiring ambition which led to a fall? For you may have noticed that men born to a middle station in life plod along in it contentedly, while those born in the lower level are scarce ever satisfied till they have climbed to the top of the social shaft. It does not follow exactly that those who start on the top round of the ladder are uneasy till they have climbed to the bottom, but it is very frequently the case. In this matter society is like the ocean, that which breaks loose from the bottom struggles up, and good ships which are launched and expected to swim on the surface go down if accident knocks a hole in them.

Little by little, Mr. Ralston got on. But the more he got on the longer were his strides. Most men set for themselves a point in life at which to rest when reached—at least they say they will rest at it: he never did. The only point where he proposed to stop was when he had

gotten as far as he could go, and this programme carried with it very few limitations as you can well imagine. Nothing short of *all* could satisfy the man. As in business, so with pleasure. For pleasure in itself he did not really care—indeed, I much doubt if he knew what it was. Lavish surroundings contributed little to his happiness, but he maintained the establishment of a prince. How it was afterward, when railroads came to be built, I do not know, but in the day of my knowledge he was whirled to his country seat by relays of horses at the close of each day's business with all the speed and more of style than any two railroads could furnish. For horses, as horses, he cared very little, and about horses, as horses, he knew less ; but his stables were full of the most famous of goers. For wine, he had no inordinate fondness, I think, but down in his cellars you found brands which are commonly supposed to be reserved for the tables of royalty alone. His "hospitality" was marvellous ; but I do not know that any can say he was hospitable—for there was so much of it. Go to him with a letter of introduction—or without one, if

you happened to be an eminent editor, prize-fighter, lawyer, theologian, horse-thief, or a member of any one of the learned professions—and he insisted upon you making his house your home while you stayed, furnishing you with horses, steamboats, palace cars, or anything else you wanted to go with when you went. Invited down to his country-seat, you were at liberty to remain as long as you pleased, and perhaps you would not see your host more than once during your visit. The whole ranche and all it contained were at your disposal, however, and if a man could not enjoy himself with such freedom of range as this, the fault surely could be but his own. I have heard it said that the Bank of California allowed him \$25,000 a year wherewith to entertain Eastern visitors. Again, I have heard it stated that no limit was fixed, but that a *carte blanche* was given him to entertain valuable visitors as he pleased, and that at the end of the year he drew for the total expense incurred. If you ask me which of these stories I believe, I reply, without the least hesitation, Neither !

You have heard of the Bank of California, of

which William C. Ralston was President at the time of his death, perhaps. Do you know what it was? No? Well, the Bank of California was William C. Ralston. At the time of its organization he was cashier only, it is true, but if you suppose that the President of a bank is anything less or is meant to be anything more than a respectable figure-head, you know less about banks in general, and New-York banks in particular, than one would suppose possible in this age of general enlightenment. As cashier, William C. Ralston ran the bank. As President he ran the bank. The bank he always was, and when the bank no longer was, he died—by suicide, some say, naturally enough, say I. Here you have the whole history of the bank in a nut shell. As for the directors or trustees, all, they were good men and rich men undoubtedly; and as such they, in common with other stockholders, had an immediate opportunity of performing the first real duties which the honorable situation of stockholder or director makes imperative, viz., paying in a handsome assessment to make their stock good. Thus the end crowns the work, and perhaps some day the day of dummies will be done.

It may be complained that I have written too much about an individual and too little about an institution. But it was necessary to tell what the one was in order to explain the workings of the other. The bank of California was restless and ambitious, in direct response to the characteristic of its founder. The two pulses beat together. As a synonym for strength, its name on the Pacific coast long ranked next to that of the Bank of England. As a power the Bank of England was but a country schoolmaster in comparison with this most despotic Caliph — locally considered, I mean. The Bank of California, either controlled, or meant ultimately to gain the control, of everything on the Coast. It was at any time ready to contract to take all the quicksilver, all the cattle, or all the wool that the country produced. A small slice of a valuable mine would not be touched at any price. But go to it with a controlling interest to dispose of, and you could name your own terms—that is to say, if William C. Ralston wanted it. Anything that he wanted from a Congregational church to a mountain in the uttermost wilderness of Nevada, the

Bank of California was willing to buy or take on deposit. It was a power in politics, a mighty engine in elections, a Colossus bestriding the State as well as the mastodon of the municipality of San Francisco: admittedly it controlled the coast, but still its restless arms were outreached for further conquest.

Again I find it very hard to refrain from moralizing. But if you deem such a monopoly as the Bank of California actually was (to say nothing of what it threatened to become) detrimental to the morals of a community, injurious in the highest degree to the welfare of a State, I'll not quarrel with you. If, on the contrary, you think such a monopoly has ever reared its head, or gone on breathing for any comfortable length of time, without getting bowled down at the good Lord's earliest leisure, you're less devout than I, and we'll say nothing more about it, for fear of getting into a theological disputation—a sort of cudgel play that should be avoided in August.

It never seemed to me that William C. Ralston did business for the purpose of making money exactly. He did business mainly for the sake of

doing business, and this, to my thinking, is not the legitimate end of business doing. If the excitement alone is wanted, why not gamble? Why do business unless you do it with a money success in view? If it's to come to the same thing at last, I, for one, would lie around in the easy attitude of one who invites his soul to loaf and be merry, rather than seize the greasy reins of commerce in my mad grasp. Sooner far would I go charioteering through the world in an ox-cart than driving a random tandem. So with pleasure. If there's no fun in it, I don't want any. The man who doesn't like drinking for its own sake is a fool to get drunk, and why should one who's not fond of riding take the risk of a broken neck, simply because his next door neighbor jogs round on horseback?

William C. Ralston did not care enough about money to keep it after it was made. What wedded him to his work was the excitement attendant upon making immense trades and moving millions. As for keeping the money he made, that never entered his mind—he scattered it broadcast on every side. It was as though a man should pump

away for dear life and all the while have nothing but a bottomless vessel to hold his pumpings—yes, as though one should pump away with clang and noise, but have never a valve in his pump. Men do this sometimes, for exercise. But exercise is not work. One must have a serious purpose in view, or even the swinging of dumb-bells avails not. And if I had not resolutely resolved to refrain from pointing a moral, I would say, right here, that the want of a worthy purpose is just the hole in which William C. Ralston and his bank went under. But I prefer that each reader should apply the great ethical blister, which I have so generously spread, for himself. Place it where it will do the most good, please !

William C. Ralston was not a bad man in reality. True, he did very many things which are commonly esteemed bad ; but I do not think that he put much heart into them. There was little of earnestness or vim about any of his dissipations ; seeing another person do a thing he thought it was the thing to do, and there must be fun in it. He never wanted to be counted out on any thing. In a very similar way he did much good. So did

the Bank of California. It encouraged many praiseworthy enterprises, developed many valuable industries, lent its shoulder frequently to public improvements, where a banking institution conducted on prudent principles would have not lent a finger. On one occasion it even lent money to me—is there need to say more? Then again the Bank of California gave aid to some schemes most outrageously corrupt. But nature in her own way turns most malfeasances to good. I do not know, however, that in such cases a credit mark goes down in the book to the account of individual or institution, unless good was intended.

As for the financial vista which this great fiasco illuminates most forcibly, I'll say nothing. With my views about the overtrading that not this country alone but the whole world as well have been given over to you are already familiar. Settling day is at hand and then you'll hear my voice. When the Pennsylvania Railroad and a few other overloaded corporations—whose wheels are even now whirling like mad under a pressure of super-heated steam and with never a balance

wheel to govern them,—fly into flinders and wondering men are looking round among the ruins for the fragments of Tom Scott, then perhaps I'll pop my head out from behind a freight car and shout; Didn't I tell you so?

This may all seem matter of a nature too transitory, a record of an event too local, to warrant preservation in a book. But the man of whom I have written was a type,—the history of the dead is the story of the living, and I here record it permanent in example and warning.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A REFORMED
PLANCHETTIST.



AM not wicked ; at the worst I am but weak.

Never have I deceived others for my own profit, nor lent myself, even constructively, to a fraud, however specious, which by any peradventure might turn to my material account.

The only cheats which I remember to have practiced, previous to Planchettism, were done for amusement's sake alone, when friends insisted on being tricked, and refused to be comforted if they were not. Under this category of innocent impostures I place the swallowing of a carving-knife, and drawing it forth thereafter with much flourish from your left ear ; putting a penny on the crown of your head and driving it by a smart blow down and through your body into one of your boots ; pretending to be pleased with a story or a casual caller when really you

are bored ; and the like. In similar manner each of us must confess to have told great lies ; for the delectation of little children, for instance, inventing tales of giants and good men that never lived ; building up on such chimerical foundations gorgeous superstructures of heroism and happiness which never had place in this world. There you have an inkling of my shortest comings and most flagrant tergiversations until the time that I fledged out as a Planchettist.

I thus premise because I have no desire to dispute the bad pre-eminence of wickedness with any of my fellow-creatures, no ambition to be made the objective point of a special mission. Fully conscious of the obliquity to which I weakly became committed, I am willing to atone, so far as in me lies, by a frank free and confession.

“How did I become a Planchettist ?” How does a man become committed to any evil career ? Insensibly and by degrees, of course.

No man clothes himself at once with the full measure of guilt, as he would put on a ready-made garment. There are gentle gradations in all iniquity. Is it probable that Mr. Tupper

contemplated volumes when he first began to platitudinize, or that Nero had the conflagration of Rome in his mind's eye when he laid in a Cremona and learned to fiddle? Certainly when first I put confiding and caressing hands on the smooth and shining back of Planchette, I had no idea of the dark path of deception on which that three-legged monster would drag me, of the depth of turpitude into which I thereby pledged myself to plunge.

But perhaps if I begin at the beginning I shall the sooner get through. Therefore let me take up the thread of events, and follow it out to its natural end in crime and confusion.

Having occasion for some alterations in the model of that great Adding Machine whereof you may have heard, I betook myself to the shop of a maker of mathematical instruments (and tinker generally); who had already failed to work out several brilliant ideas of mine—a fellow possessed of much talent in that way.

“Fritz,” quoth I, “I want these wheels cut down to half their present size and renumbered; that spring taken out, shortened, and given a

different bearing ; and the discs, or outer plates, and wood-work, silvered, gilded, and varnished. I'm in a hurry, and must have it in an hour."

I always am in a hurry in cases of the kind, for it is the height of indiscretion to confess to the ingenious mechanic that no special dispatch is required, permitting him to do things "in his own time." What is "time" to him may be eternity to you.

"Not in a week," he made answer.

This was unexpected. Usually this nimble artisan was not over driven with work, and the smallest jobs were thankfully received. Now he was full of business, independent, and of course disposed to be curt and rather impertinent. A week was out of the question. What would accountants do in the meanwhile? So I replied that such a delay was not to be thought of—day books and ledgers were not to be trifled with—and that I should be compelled to trust myself and it to the hands of some workman, less skilful, perhaps, but more mindful of the interest of early benefactors. (It is always well to take high moral ground on such occasions). But I had

the curiosity to ask what he was making that busied him so.

“Pentagraph wheels,” he said.

Well, I left his shop and went on a voyage of discovery among artificers in brass and workers in wood ; but with the most indifferent success. Very few could comprehend the machine at all, to the beautiful intricacies of its wheels and revolving discs most of them were blind as owls to the sun. One to whom I applied said he did nothing in the circular-saw business ; another informed me that I’d find a maker and mender of music-boxes somewhere in Maiden Lane. The few who could make head or tail of the machine mentioned in the outset that a cash deposit on work was always expected of strangers, and this of course cut off further conversation. So at the end of the week I again sought Fritz.

But he now could not work me the desired alterations inside of a month ; he was still making pentagraph wheels.

It seemed strange to me there should be so sudden a demand for such wheels and I asked what they were for.

“To put on a writing-machine,” he said; “something newly invented.”

Ah, thought I, a writing-machine ; here, then, is an invention nearly as important as mine, and more adapted, perhaps, to the popular need. Horace Greeley will want one ; Sam Bowles must be supplied ; and I called to mind a host of other eminent caligraphists whose pleasure in the invention would only be equalled by that of the miserable creatures who were obliged to read their manuscripts. I inquired where the machines were to be seen, and very soon thereafter was on my way to the store of a dealer in stationery, writing-desks, and other portable property.

On entering I inquired for a writing-machine.

“A what, Sir ? ”

I explained, and gave my authority for supposing there was such a thing extant and there for sale.

“Oh, Planchette ; yes, yes, Sir. Please step this way ;” and I was ushered to the back part of the store.

There I found Planchette lying in wait for whom he might devour. He was a brown-look-

ing little familiar, made of wood, and mounted on two pentagraph wheels, a lead-pencil forming his third leg ; he looked as if he might bite, and had an uncanny air about him generally. Inquiring, What is this mystery? I was informed that on two persons placing their hands upon the fellow's back, and a question being asked, he would soon begin to wriggle about (like a crab in the sand), and write an intelligible if not an intelligent answer with his plumbaginous tail.

In response to my look of incredulity came an invitation to put my hand on with the young man of the store. I did so, and asked the time of day.

"Five minutes past four," was written. This, however, did not surprise me, as there was a clock on the wall, visible to my fellow-operator as well as to Planchette.

Other persons—mostly ladies—came in to purchase Planchettes. There was an immense rush for them, and I understood how the whole town came to be making pentagraph wheels. While they were being waited on I amused myself by reading a descriptive pamphlet, republished from

an article in some English periodical. This related so many marvels of the thing that my curiosity became excited to experiment with one at my leisure: but still so incredulous was I of the powers imputed to it that I scarcely felt like purchasing one out and out. However, a compromise was finally reached by my making a deposit of the price, with the proviso that if it failed to write things my money should be retuned.

A label on Planchette's belly set forth the most favorable conditions of getting its back up for the work. It was advised that the operators be "opposite sexes, if possible, and of different complexions." Not deeming it impossible to find an opposite in sex to aid in the investigations, I started off with Planchette under my coat. I must confess that I was not altogether at my ease while carrying him thus, for if all the pamphlet set forth were true, there certainly was something impish, if not demoniacal, about the fellow. I fancied that he squirmed in my embrace, and I knew not but that in another moment he might be tearing with teeth and claws at my vitals. I thought of the Spartan boy and

his fox. But I bore him bravely on, and once at home took care to guard against his escape or any untoward demonstration by locking him securely into an oaken clothes-press.

That evening I went out to call, taking Planchette with me. It was a lady exactly my opposite, not only in complexion but (I regret to say) in disposition, whom we went to see ; and I said to myself that now, if ever, some remarkably quick stepping would be done by this fantastic courser. The lady at first thought I had brought her a new-fangled cribbage-board ; but I explained, and with some fear and trembling (she had read the pamphlet meanwhile) we placed our hands as directed, and waited events. For a full hour we sat, but beyond a few false starts and convulsive wriggles, caused by our nervous tremors, there was no movement on its part. Questions the easiest of solution we asked, but no answer came. Did it rain? (it was raining) ; what time was it? (there stood the clock) : we asked it every thing, except, perhaps, would saltpetre explode ; but it stood still, obstinate as a mule. Others came in presently—of op-

posite sexes and complexions—and they tried their hands, with equal powerlessness to produce any satisfactory result. In short, owing to the refractory behavior of Planchette, we spent a very stupid evening, staring and blinking into each other's eyes over his back; and when I packed him off home that evening it was with a full resolve never again to introduce him into good society.

Next morning on my way down town I dropped in at the Planchette dépôt, and reported the failure of my experiment, by way of preparing the proprietor to receive an addition of one to his stock. That gentleman, however, assured me that I would yet find some one for whom Planchette would write: that he would return the money (and he did, there and then), but he really wished I would keep the board, and see what came of it. This was fair enough, no extraordinary risk was involved, and I accepted the terms.

That evening I was out visiting again, and happened to mention Planchette. The ladies present became so much interested (in what the

pamphlet said of him : I denounced him unmeasuredly), and expressed so much faith in his good behavior in proper hands, that I sent for him to be brought into the presences, willing to give him a chance of redeeming his reputation.

He was brought and planted on the table, with a large sheet of paper to make it easy for his feet. Scarcely had their hands touched him when off he started like a mud-turtle (of which he was the mild simulacrum) with a coal of fire on its back. He raced round like a quarter-horse, describing the most eccentric curves and angles, writing names, and occasionally lashing out with his legs as though he had just found them. Fresh from pasture, he evidently for the first time felt his oats. So comical was it all that for the life of me I could not forbear laughing, which rather provoked one of the ladies, who inclined to take the thing in quite a serious part.

At first starting off it scribbled scriptural text glibly ; but when asked what influence moved it, wrote "Humbug." This flippant answer was attributed to the malign inspiration of my mirth, and I was soundly rated therefor ; but while the

chiding was going on it got an idea of its own and wrote "Nonsense." There upon my attention was called to the fact that I was visibly reproved by some unseen disciplinarian, to which suggestion I replied that it was not quite clear to my mind that I was the person admonished, and counsel led that the question be put to Planchette.

Asked who was talking nonsense, the sensible board (or Faculty) at once wrote the name of the lady who was taking me to task.

Asked who was the most nonsensical person in the room, it wrote the name of a little girl asleep in the adjoining apartment—who, however, so far from being sillier than any person in the room, would really have merited being written down as the brightest of all, had she been present. Probably she was "picked upon" because absent and asleep. This trait and similar ones show conclusively that Planchette's is the feminine gender: but I treat it indifferently as masculine and neuter for convenience' sake.

A note was brought me relative to the postponement of a little party which was on the tapis. I put it in my pocket. Planchette was asked

what the gentleman, had in his pocket. The wretch wrote, "A love-letter," which necessitated my reading the message aloud, in order to clear myself from a base and unworthy suspicion.

And so on the evening through, by no accident hitting the truth in any answer, until, when breaking-up time came, the question was asked ; "Now, Planchette, after all this frippery, what serious, earnest message have you for us to retire on ?"

"Do not believe in this," it wrote, smoothly as could one of those chaps who hang round hotels doing your name in fine Italian characters on visiting-cards for a living.

I was staggered in my disbelief—nay, more, I was all but convinced. The answers given, though wide of the truth, were in all cases the very replies which one would suppose the operators would not write if they had their way about it. *I* was the one to be rapped over the knuckles and reprimanded for nonsense if "larks" was the game ; and "Don't believe in this" was scarcely the message that would be chosen to

convince a skeptic—at least it so seemed at first thought.

I didn't feel quite easy at having Planchette for a room-fellow that night. I started several times, expecting to find him scratching about and endeavoring to climb into bed with me. I would rather have taken up with a bug.

Should a man share his bed with his board after making it a point all his life to never take the two together?

The mania spread, the air became full of Planchettes. Wherever you went a board was brought out as soon as the lamps were lit; the soft blandishments of music gave place to its presence, and conversation ceased. The baleful dissipation became universal. Strangely enough, however, though the thing would write for others, it would not for the lady to whom I first introduced it and me. It seemed as though it owed me a grudge for taking it out in the rain on that occasion. With one or two of her acquaintance she would put her hands on, and it walked the table like a thing of life; but for me it wouldn't stir a peg. Though we sat dumbly for

hours, mutely, almost prayerfully, invoking the mesmeric influences, until our arms were nearly paralyzed by the inaction, never a line would the pencil trace. This puzzled me, for it was my strong impression that we had about as much snap and spirituality about us as most folks. As for me individually, if I put my hands on with another it would either not move at all, or else in a disgustingly feeble manner, suggestive of weak joints. At last I declined to make any further attempts (feeling rather mortified at my frequent failures, if the truth must be told). One evening, however, a distinguished Planchettist being present, under whose hands the board was galloping about like mad, I thought I saw a key to the situation. For experiment's sake I requested the lady who was seated with him to let me make one final trial. She assented, and gave me her place. The other party seemed not over-delighted at the change (not unnatural), but made no objection. Planchette was dumb under the infliction for a moment, but at length began weakly to discourse. My hands are not as light as a lady's, and I was determined that if physical force

were used I would compel the exertion of sufficient to be visible. Before the first sentence was written I was satisfied—the thing had written its own sentence, in my mind, so far as any claim upon the credulity of mankind was concerned. The working of the digital muscles was palpable, and it was plainly to be seen that, instead of endeavoring to get away from under the operator's fingers, as would have been the case were the motion in the board, it simply followed their guidance, or took the line in which it was driven. Planchette stood revealed to me as a very tame monster after all.

Therefore in discussions with a few unbelievers of my acquaintance, who scouted my credulity in believing that any thing else than trickery underlaid the Planchettic cipher, I waxed quite wroth, and denounced them as idiots. Evening after evening I had sat (like a bump on a log) while the fiery, untamed steed, manipulated by others, went careering on its three legs over realms of thought and reams of paper, furnishing a fund of amusement for whole households. On those occasions I was not openly up-

braided for my impotency, but I knew that secretly I was looked upon as a noodle of too fleshly and earthly a nature to evoke and control the subtler essences which abound in wood and such things, and the knowledge was not pleasant.

Is it necessary for me to anticipate by declaring that the next sitting to which I was bid I suddenly developed stupendous powers, and stood revealed as the Planchettist of the Period?

It is now that my confessions properly begin, but the prelude was not uncalled for, insomuch as I wished to illustrate how a man is occasionally driven into crime in self-defense.

My career from this time forth was an eminently successful one. In my hands Planchette, when he failed to answer truthfully, told such outrageous lies that it was at once seen that some evil spirit was behind him. There were no half-statements, no hamstrung declarations concerning anything past, present, or to come; he hesitated at nothing. Sometimes, indeed, he would skate around and draw maps of unknown continents, but once started to write, and it was certain the questioner would get all and more

than he wanted to know, and as for my fingers being seen to move—trust me for that. From Planchetting one might turn to pocket-picking easily, and with no other preliminary practice.

We generally satisfied our audiences—Planchette and I. First I practiced on the friend of mine already mentioned; when it became evident that she, knowing my previous powerlessness to move the board, received my sudden development with faith and did not suspect me, it seemed clear that no one else would and in the wickedness of my heart I went forth conquering and to conquer.

Did I have no shame, no compunctions of conscience? you will ask. No, not a compunction: once mounted on Planchette and one would gallop headlong whither a beggar on horseback is reputed to ride; caring as little for who or what one rode over as a witch on her broomstick. Contact with him acted like the touch of an enchanter's wand, transforming honest men into tricksters, and turning them loose on society prepared to practice, if need be, on their own mothers.

You doubt the latter statement, but of that anon.

I improved on the tactics of the general run of Planchetists. They were always eager to perform; I affected reluctance. They would decipher scrawls which no one else could read, making out a complete sentence where it was utterly impossible to distinguish a single letter, and wondering at persons' obtusity. I, on the contrary, was the last to unravel the communication, and insisted on Planchette's rewriting it even after all others were confident that they had the right interpretation. I discovered, too, that it was easy to write upside down, or from right to left, so that a looking-glass was necessary to enable one to read the message. In fact, I evidenced a capacity for guile which at this distance surprises me, and certainly the possession of any latent talent of the kind was before unsuspected in me by others.

As an instance of how we did things—Planchette and I—one Sunday afternoon, at the house of a friend, the board was brought out. Would I put my hands on it,? No, I had rather not,

it took all the magnetism out of me, and the weather in itself was sufficiently prostrating. But there was no escape, and at last I reluctantly consented, a lady assisting.

Addressing ourselves to the inhospitable board it forthwith began to circle about and gyrate as if possessed. Asked what power was present, it promptly wrote "the devil."

"But has not Mr. Andrews" (a lawyer for whose edification the board was brought out) "any friends here?"

"Yes?"

"Who!"

"I."

"Why are you a friend of Mr. Andrews?"

"Because he is one of mine."

"Has he ever served you?"

"Yes?"

"What in?"

"In law."

"Have you ever served him?"

"Yes."

"What in?"

"In law."

"Were you at church this morning?"

"Yes."

"At whose?"

"Mr. Frothingham's."

"How did you like him?"

"First-rate."

"Has Mr. Andrews—no other friends here?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

"Theodore."

"King of Abyssinia?"

"No; Parker."

"Did he go to church this morning?"

"Ask him. I'm going away now."

And the board went to skating again. As soon as it became comparatively composed the question was asked:

"Did you go to church this morning, Mr. Parker?"

"Yes."

"Whose?"

"Mr. Frothingham's."

"How did you like him?"

"Not altogether."

"What fault do you find with him? What hint would you like to give for him to act upon?"

"He is too bold, too outspoken."

"But you used to be pretty bold and outspoken yourself, Mr. Parker. Why do you complain of him?"

"I'm wiser now."

"Should not the truth be spoke openly and boldly?"

"Not at all times, and not to all people."

"To whom should the truth not be spoken?"

"The ignorant—the many."

"What are you doing up there?"

"Improving."

"Will you tell us how to improve here?"

"No; I must go."

"Where must you go?"

"To hell."

"What are you going there for?"

"To preach."

"Do you always hold services there on Sundays?"

"Of afternoons."

"Where do you preach in the forenoon?"

“At Yarmouth.”

(The expert Planchettist will always have certain stock words and phrases to fall back upon when hurried or puzzled. Thus, when asked who was writing, I found it always safe to quote Beelzebub—he being fair game for everybody. When at a loss for an answer to a question, I wrote, “We never, never tell;” and the name of a place being hurriedly required, gave them “Yarmouth,” as about the unlikeliest town for any thing but a bloater to come from.)

I reproduce these questions and answers merely to show how absurd the latter seem on paper. But as written for the eager inquirers who conducted the investigation the answers were a success, evoking running comments of “How like Theodore Parker,” etc.

It is strange indeed, how accident will often come to the aid of imposition. As instance in point: One evening a lady, who was scarcely satisfied with the answers she had received, said she would like to apply another test, and requested that Planchette would write the word she had then in her mind.

With scarcely a moment's pause we dashed off "Sorosis."

"Well, that is wonderful," she cried. "I didn't believe much in it before, but that is convincing!" And it was rather a staggerer, if I do say it who shouldn't; but there was nothing very wonderful about it, after all. Something had been said about that remarkable club a few moments before: and I observed that the lady knitted her brows as though the knotty word took hold of her sharply, and it occurred to me that her mind might be dwelling on it then.

Another case in point—but an explanation first. My mother happened to be visiting in town; she had heard of Planchette, and of my proficiency thereat, and was desirous of seeing it write. Now what was I to do? I certainly did not wish to upset the dear old lady's preconceived notion of things, scatter her faith to the winds, to the detriment of Moses and the prophets, and turn her a drift on a sea of speculation as to the relations between mind and matter, with neither compass nor rudder; but, on the other hand, it wouldn't do to confess that

I—her first-born and her best-beloved—was a cheating juggler. So I temporized, and put the exhibition off. This was quite as bad, however ; she had come down to the city to see what was going on, and my backwardness laid me open to a charge of unkindness in thus hiding my spiritual candle under a metaphorical bushel. So one evening Planchette and I put in an appearance.

My good mother planted her spectacles, the big-bowed ones (when she mounts those she means business), and prepared to catechise. No theological abstractions did she propound, no trivial questions put she, but practical ones—concerning things about which she really wished to know, and by which her movements in a measure were to be governed. A grand-daughter had appointed to meet her at an interior town during one of the summer months, and she inquired whether the young lady would be there.

A very large and distinct “No.”

“Why, Planchette, that can not be ; I have a letter from her in my pocket, and she promises to meet me in July.”

“She won’t,” reiterated Planchette, and refused all further explanation on that head.

The next inquiry was when a younger son would be on from the West.

"On the 22d" was written.

"He is coming on the 15th, I know, for he wrote me so. Will I go West with him?"

"No."

"Well," said the old lady, as she wiped her spectacles and carefully put them away, "my opinion, Planchette, is that you are a great humbug. But we shall see."

Sure enough we did see. Next day, if I remember rightly, came a letter from the young lady regretting that she could not meet her grandmamma at the time and place proposed, and making an appointment for a meeting elsewhere later in the summer. My brother arrived on the 22d; and the old lady did not return with him to Kansas. All came true as a book. But 'twas simply because of shrewd guessing. On general principles I assumed that—setting aside in this instance that feminine fidelity to engagements which has passed into a proverb—a young lady enjoying the cool delights of a Canadian borough would scarcely feel like traveling

several hundred miles by rail to an unattractive village in the dog-days. I knew my brother had written that he would be East on the 15th, but as he was never less than a week behindhand I thought it safe to average him down to that and record it. As for the good old lady's travelling through Kansas with the Indian war-whoop sounding from its borders to our distant doors I argued that if she made herself party to such a pleasure-trip at her time of life she would display a want of sagacity incompatible with the fact of her being the mother of Yours Truly.

But the case immediately in point, referred to as illustrating how accident singularly comes times to bolster up imposture, is this: After the family exhibition just mentioned, nothing would do but that Planchette and myself should perform for the proselytism of an old gentleman over the way—a confirmed and avowed disbeliever in Planchettism, notwithstanding the stubborn facts she narrated. Hopeless as the task seemed, I undertook it with a determination worthy of a better cause, and, with Planchette under my arm (some on the boat

thought I was carrying a patent life-preserver), we made the perilous passage to Brooklyn.

On inquiring for Mr. Rawdon we were told he was up stairs, writing, but would be down presently. So Planchette and I passed the interim pleasantly in writing stupendous fictions for the children. (I carried no confederate with me ; all were gudgeons that came to my net ; in all instances the assistant was innocent.) By-and-by Mr. Rawdon made his appearance, and taking his turn at questioning, inquired what he had been doing. We replied, "Writingletters."

"What kind of letters ; to whom ?"

Unable to hit any where near the truth, we set out to come the old dodge, and write a whopper, something monstrously and funnily (all circumstances considered) improbable.

We wrote "Love-letters ;" plainly enough, it seemed to me. Our host bent over to look, and we expected a snort of indignation at the bare-faced impudence of the answer. To our surprise, on the contrary, his face flushed, and he said, seriously, "Well, that is very strange, in deed ; it has written the name of my correspond-

ent in Brazil, and I do not think any body present but myself knew it."

Certainly I did not, nor do I to this day, but I simply said to the three-legged, Steady, old fellow, and thought what a good thing 'twas that a sweet little cherub sat up aloft to watch o'er the fate of Planchette ! Was there not conclusive proof in this of its supernatural powers ? One of the beauties of the game, let me remark, was the fact that the chirography generally was so illegible that a large margin was offered for speculation and the questioner, seeing some slight resemblance in what was written to the proper answer, took it for granted that it had been written, and was satisfied and surprised.

When persons want to be humbugged it is very easy to please them. I remember one evening Planchette was asked the name of the young lady with whom a young man around the board was in love. We started to write something immediately, on the theory that those who hesitate are lost ; but the big-fisted fellow who had hands on with me bore so hardly that we could make no headway at all, and beyond a

few feeble kicks and struggles could not get without exciting unpleasant suspicions. The paper showed a cramped tracery which looked like the pattern of a lace collar quite as much as any thing else, but it was at once unanimously declared that the funny monster had drawn the profile of John's Dulcinea!

One of the strangest things about it all was that the operator after a while came to half believe in the honesty of the performance himself, getting really angry at having the genuineness of his messages questioned. Several times have I got up from the table in an indignation which was by no means altogether feigned, on being suspected or too closely pressed with questions as to my agency in the matter of writing. I had a way, however, of making the seat of the scornful so warm for him that he did not care to occupy it long, and rarely gibed a second time. 'Tis mournful, however, when one becomes insensible to his own wickedness, and assumes an air of injured innocence when good missionaries, in gros grain and watered silks, remonstrate with him. What the end would have been, where

I would have eventually brought up, had I not been arrested in my evil career, I do not know, and can hardly bear to contemplate. I might now be a long-haired spiritualist, coaxing weak raps out of my shuddering knee-pans, or throwing tables, chairs, and spittoons about the room in the name of loved ones "not lost, but gone before."

It was the frequent necessity of practicing upon near and dear friends that first aroused my slumbering conscience and prompted me to reformation. My good mother, for instance, was so pleased with Planchette that she requested me to buy her one, that she might have it ever ready to her elbow as guide, counsellor, and friend. From that dilemma, though, I extricated myself rather ingeniously by leading her to ask what or who moved the board, and writing in answer, in big, staring letters, "THE DEVIL!"

"Why the wicked thing! I declare! Take it away, Charles!" and she raised her hands before her face to shut out the sight of so hateful a monster. Never afterward did she want a Planchette, nor could I persuade her to consult it

even in secret. "To think of its swearing!" she said.

But there were others less timorous ; one lady in particular, a valued friend of mine, who in early life had lost a dear sister. This lady insisted on asking serious questions, and endeavoring to penetrate the veil between the seen and the unseen world. She wished some communication from the dead. It was in vain that I sought to turn the tide of investigation by writing the most absurd things, and announcing the presence and readiness to be questioned of Belial, Brown or Belisarius. With a persistency not to be baffled she would return to the original inquiry, blaming my light behavior and frivolous interpolations for the mocking character of the manifestations. As there seemed no way out of it, and I secretly felt somewhat provoked that so clever a lady should insist on being bamboozled, I one evening determined to gratify her, and the following is a near reproduction of the Planchetting—near enough at least, to give an idea of the tenor of the whole :

"Will not Henrietta communicate with me?"

"I am here !"

"Why did you never come before ?"

"Because of the presence of others."

"What had their presence to do with it ?"

"I wished to see you alone."

"Ah, now we have it" (to me); "this is real good. Be serious, please and don't laugh and cut up ; if you do we shall not get any more sensible answers." (To Planchette :) "Can you not visit me ?"

"I am with you often."

"When ?"

"Always. Every where."

"When is your presence most felt ?"

"In dreams."

"What are dreams ?"

"Voices and echoes."

"Whose voices and echoes ?"

"No one's."

"No one's? that is a strange answer."

I suggested that perhaps the question was not rightly put ; that there was no reason to assume that persons were meant. So the question was amended :

“Voices and echoes of what?”

“Every thing in nature.”

(I rather pride myself on that ; it was pretty, and I question whether many mediums could improve on it with as little practice as I had.)

And so the evening passed—a little to my amusement, but more to my sorrow when I came to think it over. All manner of ghostly things were inquired into, and there I sat writing down the first vague, mystical answer which came into my head. And speedy punishment followed, for thereafter I was kept at the Planchette board, like the musical young woman of the season at a piano, whole evenings through. The fame of me went abroad into the land, and I was invited out, with a postscript requesting me to bring my Planchette, just as some young men are asked to dine and come with their horns and flutes. There was an end of all conversation or any of the old time amusements ; no more “slight filtration by the light of a chandelier ;” I had to seat myself and ride the three-legged till midnight, and then home to a night-mare. This was in itself almost enough to tempt me to confession and a refor-

mation, but the main impelling power was the seriousness which the subject was assuming, and the sacredness (to me) of the things which it became necessary to trifle with.

So one day I split the mahogany monster down the chine with a carving-knife, hacked his two halves into shavings, and gave them to the flames ; taking early occasion boldly to acknowledge my former wickedness and declare my resolve to reform. More, I avowed my intention of writing out my confessions for the benefit of those yet in the bonds.

Against this I was cautioned ; it being hinted to me that though *I* might be stupid and bad enough to practice such a senseless cheat, others were honest in their dealings with Planchette and that it really told some very marvellous things in cases where deception was impossible. For instance (I demanded an instance), a gentleman in the northern part of New York, whose wife was travelling in Europe, asked Planchette (operated by two ladies, strangers to both him and his family) where his wife then was, and the name of the place was accurately written.

I must confess that this shook me a little, for I knew the gentleman well, knew how incredulous he was in articles of faith more established than these latter-day miracles, and owned to myself that if he was convinced, there might be something in Planchette despite my experience.

It happened, however, that during my summer ramblings, soon after, I "towered" through that stretch of country, and spent some days in the vicinity. At a dinner one day I met a lady who chanced in the afternoon to become my partner at croquet. During the intervals of the game our conversation turned on Planchette, and I frankly confessed the role I had acted. She said she never had hands on Planchette but once, and that then she displayed a power which surprised herself and others. I fancied a slight smile on her face, and mentioned the astonishing revelation which had been described to me as occurring in that part of the country. The smile deepened into a laugh as she remarked that she could tell me all about it, having been one of the performers.

"Now tell me truly," said I, "*sub rosa*, you

know—did or did you not manufacture that message yourself ? ”

She owned that she did, but declared that she sat until she was tired, and there wasn't much fun in that ; so when Mr. Pomeroy asked where his wife was she wrote “ Ems,” just to see what they'd say.

“ But you were a stranger to her, and had never met him before ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Then how do you know she was at Ems ? ”

“ Why he told me so himself, not five minutes before. I expected when I wrote it that he would say so at once, but he didn't remember telling me—on the contrary declaring that no one in the room but himself knew his wife's whereabouts ; so I thought I'd let it go.”

There you see what a wonderful fellow Planchette is, when you come to sift him !

A friend not long since was telling me of his investigations. Planchette was manipulated by two young ladies, ex-officio professors of the art, and he had been asking questions, but got such silly and untrue answers that he was about to

give up in disgust, convinced that they were making game of him.

But a thought struck him, and he resolved to give the thing one more trial. A copy of *Le Journal pour Rire*, which he had just received from Paris, lay on the table ; the name of its editor printed in very small letters at the bottom of the last page.

"Here," said he, "tell me the name of the editor of this journal."

They wrote "Philippon."

"By George !" cried he, starting up, "there is something strange and almost unaccountable about that. I know that neither of these young ladies knew the name of the editor."

"Oh yes, *I* did," exclaimed one of them, leaning breathlessly forward ; "I noticed it this morning, and wondered what they printed it way down there for."

The ruling feminine passion asserted itself there. Rather than admit that there was *one* thing she didn't know, she lost the convert she was endeavoring to make. Of course he saw nothing strange and unaccountable in the writing of the name (misspelt at that) in the light of her admission.

Here is another instance of how easily persons are deceived when they have their mouths made up for the wonderful :

A lady residing in New York was spending the summer at a mountain village in New Hampshire. Her husband undertook to send her all the news. When Elliot the painter died he telegraphed to her, "Elliot—artist—dead." The dispatch came in the afternoon, and she did not make it public.

That evening Planchette was on the table—all were immensely interested in that gay deceiver up there. A gentleman friend of Mr. Elliot, was present. Having an idea that she could surprise them a little, the lady, when her turn came to put hands on the board, wrote "Elliot," repeating the name several times.

The gentleman wondered if any thing was wrong with his friend. When he last saw him the artist was in very poor health ; and at last he asked, "Has Mr. Elliot any thing to say to me?"

She then wrote the telegram she had received, word for word, "Elliot—artist—dead!"

Of course all present were very much astonished, and the gentlemen was not a little distress-

ed—observing that certainly this was very strange , 'twould be remarkable indeed if Elliot were really dead ; in any event they would know to-morrow.

If astonished that evening, judge of the sensation next day, when news came through public channels that the artist was indeed deceased. Could any doubt be entertained of the mysterious power of Planchette after that ?

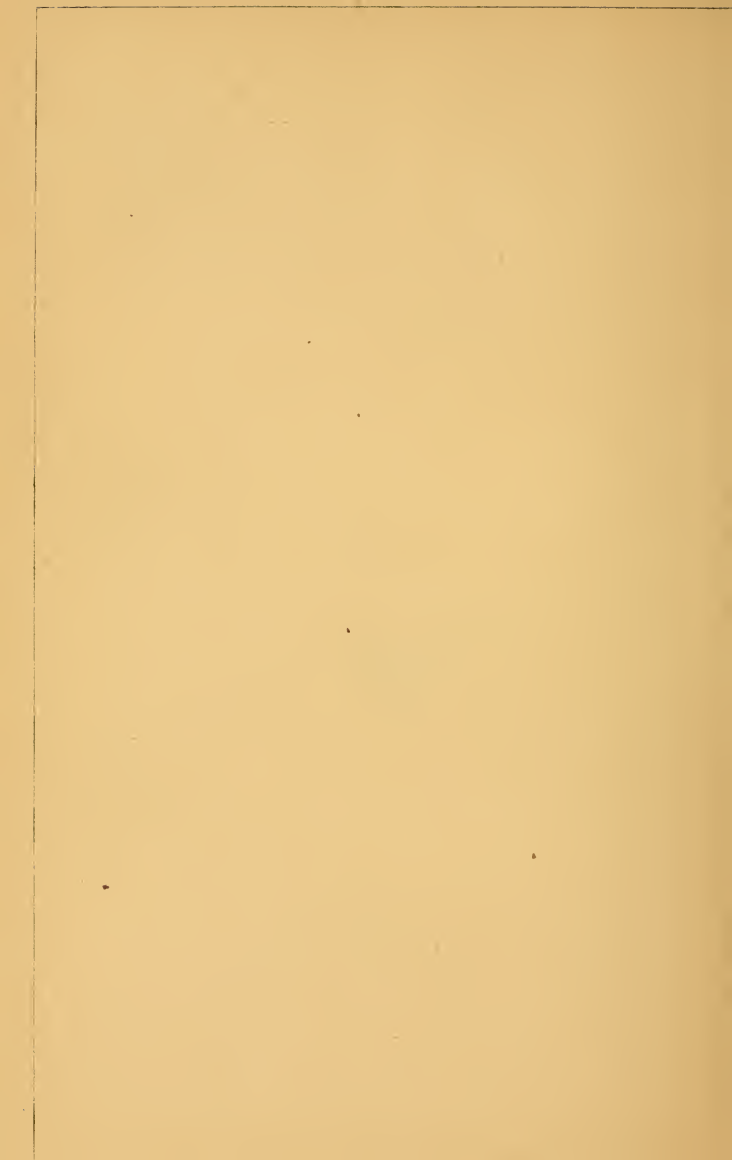
It will be seen that this instance illustrates not only how easy it is to deceive people, but also how naturally the best disposed persons will drift into deception when such tempting opportunities present themselves. There is a pleasure in mystifying others, and when successfully accomplished the delight is too dear to sacrifice it all by confessing how the effect was produced. But since I have knelt down at the confessional a good many practiced Planchettists have joined me. And to briefly sum up for the benefit of all, when you can pat a terrapin on the back and get him to respond in Coptic with his tail, 'twill be time to persuade me that a block of wood can be "charged" sufficiently to write sentences.

Mine was charged (it stands charged against me I believe, to this day), but it would only write when I wrote—and that is the truth of it.

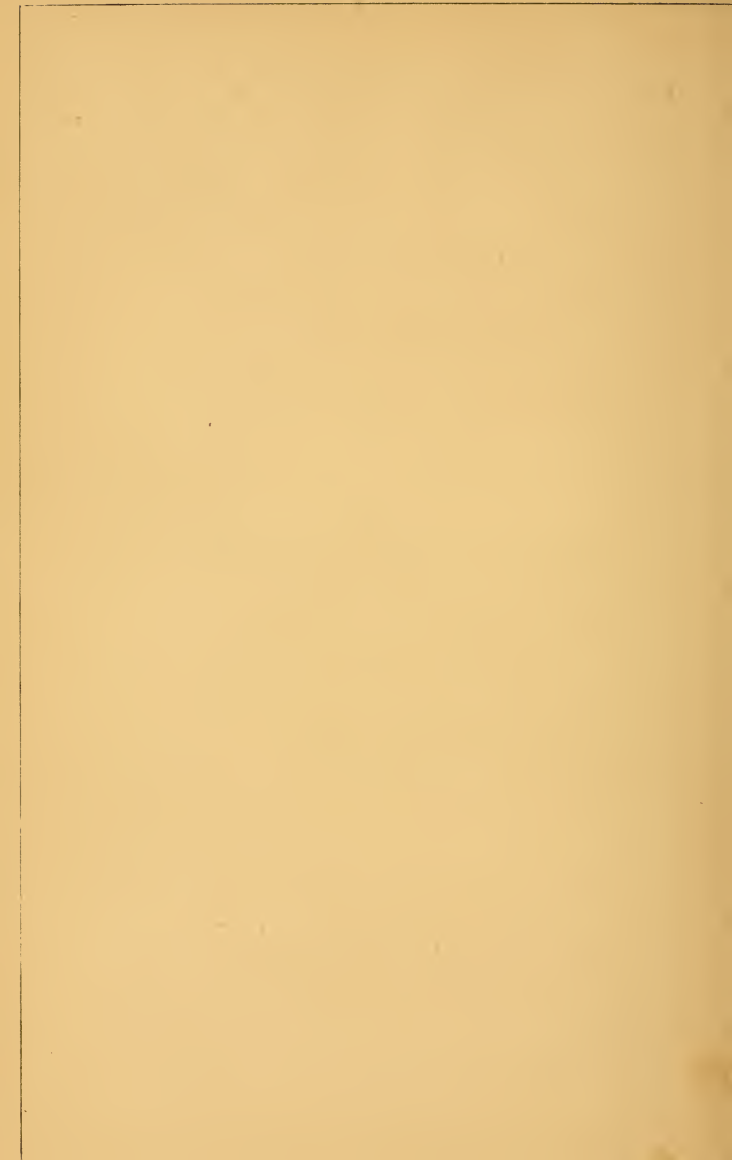
The above was written and printed some years ago. In the meantime Planchette has died the death and now there are none so poor as do him reverence: But at the time of publication I was reviled on all sides. Time has vindicated me, you see, for had Planchette been a thing of truth it would have remained a joy forever. And now I can state a fact not generally known perhaps. The Planchette mania was kindled by articles descriptive of the instrument republished from an English periodical. The author professed to have found one in use in a backwoods house, somewhere in Vermont, and gave a marvellous account of its performance. But he has since told a friend of mine that the article was purely imaginative throughout; that he never saw, and indeed never heard of such a thing; 'twas fabricated out of his own head. As I have said he spoke of it as originating in the United States, and being in frequent use

here. The truth of it is a Planchette was never known in this country or any where else until put on the market by a shrewd stationer who contrived to manufacture it from the fanciful description given by the Englishman.





VACATION VERSES.



AUTUMN LEAVES.

THE melancholy days have come,
Which Mr. Bryant sings,
Of wailing winds and naked woods,
And other cheerful things.

The robin from the glen has flown,
And there Matilda J.
Now roams in quest of autumn leaves
To press and put away.

Leaves in the sere, to school-girls dear,
Are found where'er one looks,
On hill, in vale, in wood, in field,
But mostly in my books.

If I take up my Unabridged
Some curious word to scan,
Rare leaves are sped of green and red,
Or maybe black and tan.

The book of books—my Bible—now
I scarcely dare to touch,
Lest it bring grief to some rare leaf—
Ash, maple, oak, or such.

And if upon the lounge I lie
To read while I repose,
Lo ! arid leaves in dusty sheaves
Sift down upon my clothes.

No more I swear in empty air,
But straight invoke a broom,
And soon St. Bridget comes and sweeps
The rubbish from the room.

O autumn leaves, rare autumn leaves,
So lovely out-of-doors,
Strew the wild wood (you could or should),
But muss not Christian floors !

Too late I know a solemn truth
I did suspect before :
These leaves that autumn branches bear
Are an autumnal bore.

THE FISHER'S DAUGHTER.

If you go to where the billow
Tosses on its rocky pillow,
In an ever restless pain ;
Where the sea in vain atoning
Seemeth ever to be moaning
Masses for the sailors slain ;
You may see a little maiden
Waiting, watching—weary laden—
Watching all the live long day,
If she haply may discover
The light shallop of her lover,
Like a bird upon the bay.

Maiden, said I, fisher's daughter,
Look no more upon the water,
Prithee leave this mocking shore ;
Knows't thou not that foam-bellss winging,
Long time since were dirges ringing,
For the one who comes no more ?

That thy sailor lad is sleeping
In the water-kelpie's keeping,
 Leagues of ocean far away ;
And that now if thou'ds't discover
The light shallop of thy lover
 Thou must look beyond the bay ?

But the maiden still is sitting,
And she fancies in the flitting
 Of each bird upon the bay,
In each sea-gull's pinion glancing,
That she sees a white sail dancing—
 William on his homeward way.

And you may not chide the maiden—
Even I, with heart sad-laden,
 When the silent hours are nigh,
Watch and wait, and fondly dreaming,
All my fancies real seeming,
 Gaze upon the changing sky.
It was through their golden portal
That there went a lovely mortal—
 Angels know she did not die—

Now I gaze, as night draws nigher,
Where the billowing clouds swell higher,
If I may not gain some tiding,
See some silver shallop gliding
Bearing tiding of the lost one—
Comfort to the tempest-tost one—
So I sit, thus fondly dreaming,
All my fancies real seeming,
 Though the lips of reason say :
Cease thy longing, luckless wisher,
With the daughter of the fisher,
 Learn to look beyond the bay.

SEA AND SHORE.

THE Sea is a stern old monarch,
As cruel as monarch may be ;
And navies they quail and pilots turn pale
At the sway of his sceptre, my Sea.

The earth is a sullen old baron,
Morose as a baron may be ;
And he watches all day from his rock-towers gray,
For he feareth his cousin, the Sea.

The sea is a cruel old monarch,
The earth but a baron is he ;
But of Christian souls more have been wrecked
on shore
Than ever were lost at sea.

DAS MEERMÆDCHEN.

Oh Spring is blithe and Summer gay
The Autumn golden and Winter gray.

But the seasons come and the seasons go,
All alike to me in their ebb and flow,

Since the day I rode by the cheating sea,
And one of its maidens had speech with me.

Her skin was whiter than words can speak,
The blush of the sea-shell lit her cheek ;

Her lips had ripened in coral caves,
Her eyes were blue as the deeper waves ;

And her fair yellow hair fell fair and free
In a shower of amber upon the sea.

“ Knight, gallant knight, a boon I pray :
Give me to ride thy charger gray.”

“ Oh, ships for the sea, but steeds for the shore,
I'll give thee a boat with a golden oar ! ”

“ Nay, gallant knight, no charm has the sea ;
I would dwell on the green earth ever with thee.”

For her speech was fair as her face was fair ;
Had she asked my soul it was hers, I swear.

And I led her as light as sea-birds flit
Where my steed stood champing his golden bit.

The stirrups of silver were wrought in Spain ;
My hand into hers put the silken rein.

And that is the last, though the stars are old,
I saw of my steed with his housings of gold.

Was ever such folly in all the world wide ;
But who would have thought a mermaid could ride.

Or a maiden of earth, of air, or the wave,
Should fly from her love with the wings he gave ?

Faithless and loveless I walk by the shore,
Never a maiden has speech with me more.

But this brings not back my charger gray,
Nor the false, false love who rode him away.

THE NEW SONG.

The ship, the ship, the good old ship !
She's bound to make a jolly trip ;
Spare captains two, and clergy three,
I'm sure the ship can't sink at sea.

The Golden Gate ! the Golden Gate !
We're bound to reach it soon or late ;
We'll stem the San Juan's rolling flood
If they don't stick us in the mud.

The transit route will not be cool—
Crossing the Isthmus on a mule ;
Go in a coach you who agree,
But get a pacing mule for me.

Some men have wives upon the spot—
Some seem to have them who have not ;
Deck promenades are very fine,
But don't walk off with wife of mine.

It is no harm, one kiss or more—
But do it all behind the door ;
The art of kissing seems to me
Is not to let the others see !

Lights out at ten ! lights out at ten !
If that's the law, we say amen ;
The moon is left, and so is Mars,
Thank Heaven they can't blow out the stars.

Havana is a pretty place :
But, Captain, in the name of grace,
When all its lamps are plain in sight,
Why don't you " tie up " for the night ?

We stop to sound upon the sea,
But of all sounds, the gong for me ;
I don't like iron, but after all
The oxide's better than the ball.

The time draws near when we must part,
So says the captain and the chart ;
The opera troupe must troop on shore—
Our Prima Donna 'll be no MOORE.

Perhaps the warmest heart may cool,
Crossing the Isthmus on a mule ;
But when the voyage is safely through,
Remember those that sung for you.

AT THE BALL!

Is the ball very stupid, *ma mignonne*?

Pauvre petite, you look ennuied to death—
There is *Bête*—*n'est-ce pas?* in your eye,
And a *soupçon* of yawn in your breath.

Of a truth it is stupid, *ma mignonne*;

The giver is wrinkled and gray!
The dances are older than Rome,
And the dancers as well are *passé*.

The wine that they give us, *ma mignonne*,
Is but *vin ordinaire*, thin and poor,—
It comes from a shop in *Rue Jacques*,
And it cost but *ten sous*, I am sure.

There's a ghost stirring somewhere, *ma mignonne*;
The lamps all burn dimly and low,
And the music would do for *La Morgue*—
Allons! not quite yet I won't go.

Come sit on this *fauteuil*, *ma mignonne*,
And show me the make of that glove.
It is *Jouvin*, I think now you're wicked!
Reste tranquille un moment, that's a love.

Who called the ball stupid, *ma mignonne*?

'Tis the best we have had for a week ;
The dances are lively enough,
And for music—*j'attends*, please to speak !

One glass *à ta santé*, *ma mignonne* ;

On the rim of my cup print a kiss—
Never tell me again of Bordeaux ;
There's no red wine in life like to this !

Who said lamps burned dimly, *ma mignonne*?

Look, the *salon* is lighter than day—
It was queer, to find fault with the light !
Not enough ! there's too much, *verité*.

At what time did *ta maman*, *ma mignonne*,

Suggest that the carriage should call ?
Sainte Vierge ! it is striking the hour—
Do you wish to go home from the ball ?

THE END.

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